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ABSTRACT

The papers in this volume resulted from a conference of British language educators convened to explore the common interests of those concerned with teaching English and foreign languages, particularly to the 11-15 age range. The students' social background and the special needs of immigrant children were also considered in relation to language in the curriculum. The first eight papers in this collection are revised versions of those presented at the conference. They are: (1) "English and Foreign Languages" by G. E. Perren, (2) "A Social View of Language in School" by Harold Rosen, (3) "Towards an Educational Theory of Language" by Peter Doughty, (4) "English in the Curriculum" by James Britton, (5) "Modern Languages in the Curriculum" by Eric Hawkins, (6) "Attitudes Toward Foreign Learning in Early Adolescence" by Clare Burstall, (7) "Patterns in the Discourse of Pupils and Teachers" by Ian J. Forsyth, and (8) "The Space Between" by James Wight. The ninth paper draws attention to some problems arising from discussions at the conference. An appendix listing participants is included. (Author/LG)

CILT Reports and Papers 10

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The space between...

English and foreign languages at school

Papers from a conference on
Language in the middle years of secondary education
held at the Manchester Teachers' Centre,
20-22 November 1973

May 1974
Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research

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Foreword

This collection of papers results from a conference convened by the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research on 20-22 November 1973 on behalf of nine local education authorities in the North West.

The aim was to bring together those concerned with teaching English and teaching foreign languages, particularly to the 11 to 15 age range, to explore their possible community of interest. The social background of all children and the special needs of immigrant pupils were also to be considered in relation to language in the curriculum.

About 100 delegates attended, representing a very large and densely populated urban area and a wide range of educational responsibility and concern. The first eight papers in this collection are revised and edited versions of papers circulated and presented at the conference, while the ninth draws attention to some outstanding problems, arising from the plenary and group discussions.

The goodwill and assistance of the participating authorities in planning and organising the conference are gratefully acknowledged, while special thanks are due to the Warden and staff of the Manchester Teachers' Centre, where it was held.

G. E. Perren
Director,
Centre for Information on
Language Teaching and Research

February 1974

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1

G E Perren

English and foreign languages

It can be argued that in schools the teaching of English (as a mother tongue) and the teaching of a foreign language are tasks so completely different that there is no strong reason why they should be correlated at all. Possibly this view was more tenable in the past than it is today, but in any case there can often be little similarity in immediate classroom aims. English, after all, is already known by children when they come to school, and traditionally the first task is to teach children to read and write the language they already speak. This is an activity very different from the first stages of teaching a foreign language and in any case begins much earlier. Even if a foreign language is taught from eight in the primary classes, it cannot be done by replicating processes by which the mother tongue was originally acquired. In brief, while English teaching throughout the primary and secondary range seeks to extend, improve and develop skills which largely exist, foreign language teaching has to begin by initiating elementary control of a phonological and grammatical system previously unknown to the learner. Thus in one sense English is already known; foreign languages have to be taught.

Apart from differences between immediate classroom objectives, the curricular aims are quite different. As always, these have developed, changed and redefined themselves over the years; English teachers and foreign language teachers alike inherit, and then expand or reject the experience and aims of earlier generations of teachers; however much they change their aims individually, a kind of collective professional conscience persists. Thus English is regarded not only as central to the curriculum and necessary for progress in all subjects, but as a principal means for the socialisation of children, for the development of personality, for the preservation of society and for the transmission or clarification of its social and cultural values. From the earliest years in school the aesthetic as well as the practical responsibilities of English are generally recognised. Foreign languages seldom claim such wide responsibilities — indeed hitherto most children have had to do without them — only the more able had a chance to learn them. As far as less able children are concerned, no-one has ever suggested that they should be taught less English — the reverse is

true, it is often argued that they should have more; but whether they can profitably be taught a foreign language at all is still a subject for debate.

But despite such practical differences in their tasks and despite their difference in curricular or educational status, English and foreign languages must be involved one with another, not only at the theoretical level (because both are languages) but also at the practical and individual level (because both are languages). Inevitably an English-speaking child learns French *by reference* to his knowledge of English, although he doesn't learn it in the same way. The differences between mother-tongue acquisition and foreign language learning cannot be elaborated here, but it is clear that acquiring the mother tongue is a unique experience which cannot ever be repeated in another language. However, the English-speaking child must conceptualise the nature and structure of French initially within a framework of his prior knowledge of English. In linguistic terms, his performance in French must rest on his assumed competence in English. Often the link is much more explicit : the pupil translates (and so does his teacher) because this is how he best understands the meanings of the new noises and shapes presented. And it has not required advanced techniques of contrastive analysis to show teachers that certain points of similarity or difference between L1 and L2 necessitate special emphasis in teaching, although linguistic insight has helped to make it much easier, and in particular has improved textbook and course construction. But the most doctrinaire direct-methodist never convinced his pupils, even if he ever convinced himself, that they knew no English when he taught them French. And the view that the mother tongue is primarily a source of linguistic *interference* with the learning of a foreign language seems essentially a negative one. The mother tongue is there, like it or not, and there would be no foreign language teaching without it.

Today, we are much concerned about integrating the curriculum for social, psychological and indeed administrative reasons, sometimes derived less from a desire to teach individual subjects as well as possible than from belief in a philosophy of education which should provide equal and varied opportunities for all. A hundred years ago, schools could be divided into 'first grade', 'second grade' and 'third grade', and in each there was a different justification for languages — at that time for the classics[1]. More recently it was still possible to define a fairly clear difference between the aims of foreign language teaching for modern, technical and grammar schools[2]. In comprehensive schools, while we accept that achievements must vary according to pupils' ability and opportunities may vary according to their needs, the underlying educational principle presupposes a greater unity of the curriculum than before. The introduction of French in the non-selective primary school has in fact begged the question of whether foreign language teaching in secondary schools should be restricted to selected pupils. At the other end of the scale, the growth in non-'A'-level sixth

[1] See : Schools Inquiry Commission, 1868
[2] See *Language*. Ministry of Education pamphlet 26, 1954. pp. 20-22
Modern Languages. Ministry of Education pamphlet 29, 1956. pp. 45-56

forms suggests a fresh social (if not necessarily academic) reason for integration. Somewhere in the middle, between the ages of about 11 and 15, muddle remains. This is indeed the very stage of education at which most children (and their parents) expect something useful to take home, and something which will eventually decide their future education, occupation and place in a highly mobile society. The picture may be made much more complicated by the presence in schools of numbers of pupils whose mother tongue is not English, or is a dialect of English which presents special problems. How do these children fit into a national philosophy of English teaching, of foreign language teaching or of an integrated curriculum?

It seems therefore appropriate to consider how far it may be beneficial to attempt to co-ordinate the teaching of English with whatever teaching and learning of foreign languages there may be, especially in the middle years, not only in the interests of the subjects concerned, but for the benefit of the general curriculum and the majority of the pupils. The purpose of this paper is to glance at the development of aims in both English and foreign language teaching — which may help to explain where we stand today — and then to consider the implications for the future. In so doing we should not overlook that there may be an element of teaching English as a foreign language (or as a new dialect) which has to be taken into account.

A recent book[2] has admirably described and commented on the history of English teaching, using as sources not only the views of influential authors and various reports, but also the texts and courses used in schools. There is understandably a considerable time lag before the 'advanced' views of educationists or teacher trainers become reflected in the textbooks and courses used by the majority of pupils, while periodic reports by commissions, boards, ministries or departments of state often take a cautious look both ways, being very careful to give due praise to the 'best' traditional practice while commending new approaches which seem valuable. This means of course that at any given time there is no consensus of views about the aims of English teaching, rather a variety of opinions, stratified according to the age, training, and experience of the individual teachers and the conventions or traditions of the schools in which they teach. Unfortunately, we have as yet no comparable survey of the development of foreign language teaching over the same period. However, a comparison of the reports, apologia, excuses and justifications for the teaching of English on the one hand and for the teaching of modern languages on the other since 1900 shows an almost complete lack of practical suggestions for co-ordinating their teaching. While it is true that from time to time there are references to common ground occupied by the 'humanities' in opposition to the 'sciences', and there is a shared allegiance to literary values, that is about as far as it goes, apart of course from periodic skirmishes about who teaches grammar.

We must recall that both English and foreign languages in schools had a common ancestor in the classics. With the development of widespread sec-

[2] D. Shayer: *The teaching of English in schools 1900-1970*. Routledge, 1972

ondary education, both had to fight for independence from their august parentage; both had to justify their place in schools in their own ways. The purpose of English, which had to be taught to all pupils, inevitably became very much wider than that of foreign languages, which were only taught to some. But the 'classical fallacy' persisted in English teaching for many years, influencing it through a transfer of method and of didactic purpose. This is particularly noticeable in attitudes to literature, grammar and rhetoric[4], and in the view that English had to some extent to provide some of the logical and facultative training formerly associated with the classics. Probably it was not before the Newbolt Report of 1921[5] that English was authoritatively justified as central to the curriculum in its own right and finally broke its links with the classical tradition. Yet the Newbolt Commission was even then not yet able to recommend a national policy for English teaching in all secondary schools, simply because at that time no national system of secondary education existed[6]. However,

> '. . . we state what appears to us as an incontrovertible primary fact, that for English children no form of knowledge can take precedence of a knowledge of English, no forms of literature can take precedence of English literature, and the two are so inextricably connected as to form the only basis possible for a national education'.[7]

Clearly no such claims could ever be made on behalf of foreign languages. In the 1900s they certainly had to break away from the methodology of the classics, and the influence of the earlier direct-methodists helped here. Modern languages could also claim (for the minority who were enabled to learn them) the special liberal values of Modern Studies. They claimed a clear vocational as well as an educational purpose. Nevertheless some classical traditions clung very much longer to foreign language teaching than they did to English, and even in 1956 it could be stated :

> 'Whatever the claims of modern languages to an important place in the curriculum, it must be said at the outset that they cannot be justified unless the course contains intellectual discipline',[8]

and

> '. . . the study of modern languages in common with the study of English and the ancient classical languages has not only a logical and intellectual value : it can also — if it is conceived as broadly and liberally as the traditional study of Latin and Greek — provide the artistic and aesthetic training which marks a truly educated and cultured person'.[9]

There certainly seems to be a point of principle in common here, if only at one particular level (although many English teachers might not have been too eager

[4] Shayer, op. cit. pp. 6-9
[5] *The teaching of English in England*, 1921
[6] *Language*, op. cit. p. 65
[7] *The teaching of English in England*, op. cit. p. 14
[8] *Modern languages*, op. cit. p. 1
[9] Ibid. p. vi

to accept the offer of such a grand alliance). However, in 1954 it had been noted :

> 'Literature [is] the highest and most indestructible form of language, and therefore the most reliable guide to mastering the use of words .... A great deal of time has been wasted in the schools and in public discussion, in trying to change the aims of English teaching. All that is needed is a refinement and improvement of methods, a more judicious distribution of emphasis and a conviction inside and outside the schools, that the teaching of English matters'.[10]

Nevertheless, it is noticeable that among English teachers the unquestioned status of the term *literature* began to fade by the 1960s. A handbook of 1966[11] refers rather to 'the appreciation and comprehension of prose' to 'teaching poetry' and to 'drama' for grammar schools, although, be it noted, secondary modern pupils 'must be given access to those regions of our literature that fall within their scope, so that they shall not be denied a delight that is in some measure open to all literate adults'.[12] And by 1973[13] the terms 'extensive reading' and 'intensive reading' are used to cover materials and methods which no doubt would have been covered by 'the teaching of literature' a decade or so earlier.

Foreign language teachers, perhaps because their tasks were restricted to selected pupils, seemed less embarrassed to confess literary aims. There was indeed argument about what *kind* of literature should be read, and a lively movement to displace older authors by newer ones. But in the 1950s and 1960s a new emphasis on the spoken language — reinforced by the technical aid of tape-recorders and language laboratories and by the psychological prop of behaviourist interpretations of language learning processes — was the main influence at work. Literature remained, however, as a prime examination objective — supported by the requirements of university entrance.

The extension of foreign language teaching to secondary modern schools raised problems both of its educational purpose and of its surrender value for the 15-year-old leaver. In 1956, it was stated that 'There is little hope of attaining good results unless it [the foreign language course] extends over a period of four years. . .' with at least one period a day.[14] In 1969, a Schools Council survey of teachers' opinions drawn from grammar, modern and comprehensive schools, said :

> 'For the most able pupils a modern language is the key to a foreign literature and to the other higher intellectual activities of another people, but it is generally agreed that for all but the most able pupils,

[10] *Language*, op. cit. p. 162
[11] IAAM : *The teaching of English*. 3rd edn. Cambridge University Press, 1966
[12] Ibid. p. 169
[13] AMA : *The teaching of English in secondary schools*. 4th edn. Cambridge University Press, 1973
[14] *Modern Languages*, op. cit. pp. 45-46

and perhaps even for them, a purely literary approach is inappropriate'.[15]

Not much is said, however, about alternative aims for the less able beyond :

> 'Many teachers have been surprised, and not only in language teaching, by what many pupils with little academic ability can achieve when teaching methods and subject matter are deliberately related to their aptitudes and interests'.[16]

What the methods and subject matter should be, remained vague.

As pointed out earlier, proposals for working relations, not to mention correlation, between the teaching of English and the teaching of foreign languages have been extremely rare. Any such proposals seem to have come more often from foreign language teachers than from English teachers. The teaching of grammar is a case in point. Long ago teachers of English rejected demands that English grammar should be taught to underpin Latin, and more recently they have opposed teaching it to assist foreign languages. When in 1967 such a tentative suggestion was made by foreign language teachers :

> 'Some co-operation between teachers of different languages and of English is useful in order to standardise as far as possible the grammatical terminology affecting more than one language',[17]

English teachers were adamant :

> 'All of us rejected stoutly the view that it was the duty of the teacher of English to teach grammar for the benefit of the foreign language department'.[18]

This particular controversy may well turn on what is meant by 'grammar'. One of the results of today's applied linguistics could well be a desire for more co-operation here than in the past. If English teachers are unlikely to return to normative grammar of the parsing and clause-analysis type, they do seem to be paying increasing attention to the value of describing in linguistic terms the structures characteristic of spoken English language as well as of its written forms. Tranformational-generative theory implies an inter-lingual currency, if not yet completely free trade, across language boundaries. A Council of Europe Seminar of 1970[19] on the place of grammar in modern methods of language teaching noted that teachers of the mother tongue and of foreign languages should explore possibilities of co-ordinating their work in teaching grammar.

[15] Schools Council: *Development of modern language teaching in secondary schools.* Working Paper no. 19, 1969. p. 4
[16] Ibid. p. 5
[17] IAAM: *The teaching of modern languages.* 4th edn. University of London Press, 1967. p. 37
[18] AMA, op. cit. p. 2
[19] Brussels, 16-20 November 1970. *See* Council of Europe document CCC/EGT (71) 14

More explicitly another Council of Europe Symposium of 1972[20], noting that achievement in a second language correlates well with ability to discover grammatical patterns, thought that a 'linguistic model' developed through mother-tongue teaching would be of use in foreign language teaching. To some this may seem merely another way of saying that if only the 'right' English grammar were taught it would help French, German etc. but there may be more to it than that. A common 'model' might be useful to both languages. The same meeting emphasised that the mother tongue should be seen not only as a source of 'interference' but also as a source of help in learning a foreign language.

Apart from grammar, there have been other areas where a potentially useful relationship has been mentioned. Tentatively, the Newsom report of 1963 considered whether foreign languages in the secondary modern school might not be a compensatory subject for those weak in English[21] — perhaps more on psychological than linguistic grounds. Rather expansively, the IAAM recorded in 1967 :

> 'It is one of the arguments of those who favour the teaching of French as the first foreign language that the search for clarity of expression in that language is reflected in the student's use of his own national idiom. Certain it is that the objective approach to the whole problem of self-expression can be transferred'.[22]

More comprehensively, the Schools Council Working Paper of 1969 said :

> 'The aims of teaching a modern language. . . are to enhance the pupils' consciousness of language and to extend their range of expression, not only in the foreign language but also in the mother tongue; evidence suggests, for example, that time which may be taken from English lessons to learn a foreign language does not necessarily result in pupils' work in English being impaired'.[23]

(The response of English teachers to this one does not seem to be recorded.)

Such scraps do not really add up to very much, certainly not to an alliance. In British educational parlance the word 'language' is now used a great deal, but almost always signifies only mother-tongue English, and very seldom seems to embrace those other languages a child knows or is learning. Certainly when 'language' is used in a general sense it seldom includes say French or German in relation to English-speaking children, although it may extend to English (as a foreign language) in the case of immigrants : e.g. '. . . it was realised that language deprivation was a factor which seriously affected the

[20] *Symposium on the connection between the teaching and learning of the mother tongue and the learning of other modern languages.* Helsinki, Dec. 1972. Council of Europe Document CCC/ESR(73)26

[21] Ministry of Education: *Half our future.* 1963. p. 161. The same argument has been used to justify primary school French.

[22] IAAM : *The teaching of modern languages,* op. cit. p. 4

[23] Schools Council, op. cit. p. 4

educational advancement of immigrant and indigenous children alike'.[24] Such usage may cover some confusion of thought, if it is assumed that immigrant children can be 'deprived' in a foreign language in a sense comparable to indigenous children being 'deprived' in their mother tongue. There is, of course, no evidence of immigrant children suffering deprivation in their mother tongues (Urdu, Punjabi etc.) simply because these languages are not used in British schools. To make consistent sense, the concept of language deprivation should either be applied to the mother tongue only, or include *all* the languages a child may know. As far as the needs of immigrants are concerned, statements during the past few years have oscillated between linguistic over-simplification and sociological complication: on the one hand the belief that a good dose of English as a foreign language well taught is enough and will equip them to take their place alongside those who have it as a mother tongue; on the other hand a realisation that the implantation of a substitute mother tongue is a far wider task than schools in Britain are equipped for at present, and may indeed be impossible. West Indian children have been recognised as a special case, but the experience of constructing *Concept 7-9* shows that materials and methods suitable for West Indian children are also appropriate to many 'indigenous' British children. Such terms as 'language deprivation' or 'linguistic disadvantage' are more often used about social than purely linguistic problems. False conclusions —leading to an inappropriate quasi-foreign language approach for dialect speakers of English — can only too easily arise from classifying as *language deficiencies* what are really *language differences*. Bernstein's codes refer properly to language *use* rather than language *forms*, 'with no clear indication that speakers limited to a restricted code suffer any cognitive defect'.[25] A similar view may well apply to West Indian English.

Although made in a different context, Rée's remark, 'The teacher of English was once in the same boat as the teacher of a foreign language; he too, like many a colonial schoolmaster, was imposing an alien culture on innocent children...'[26] carries a warning for all. In discussions about immigrants' language problems their own mother tongue is usually neglected. *How* they should be taught English and *whether* they should be taught French are live enough issues. But what of their own Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi, Gujerati, Bengali, Greek, Turkish and so on? Where should these fit into the picture of language in education? What use should be made of *these* mother tongues? At present they are linguistically neglected and educationally ignored. Arguments that a foreign language provides greater resources conceptually to those who know it seem to be overlooked when we are dealing with such genuine bilinguals as immigrants.

Sufficient has been said to indicate some causes of confusion about the

[24] Memorandum quoted in *Education*: vol. 1: *Report*. Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration. HMSO. 1973. p. 8

[25] Baratz, Joan C., in *The language education of minority children* (ed. B. Spolsky). Newbury House, Rowley, Mass., 1972. pp. 140-142

[26] Hipkin, J., E. Hawkins and H. Rée: 'The position of modern languages in the secondary school curriculum'. *Audio-Visual Language Journal*, vol. 11, no. 1, 1973. pp. 69-70

interrelationship of languages and their teaching in the curriculum. Presumably all would be simpler in schools where no foreign languages were taught and where all children come with an acceptable form of English as their mother tongue. If rare today, such schools will be unknown in future. Complexities are greater in urban areas which have mixed and mobile populations (and teachers). Social conditions outside the schools' control intervene; language use outside the school is as important as inside; the mass media are insistent, pervasive and influential — for good or ill.

If correlation, co-ordination and co-operation are desirable across the whole field of language teaching — including mother tongues, the English of education and foreign languages — then teachers need more help than they receive. Clearly much could be done in pre-service training. Linguistics (in various guises) is becoming more common in colleges of education, although perhaps not in university departments of education, often linked to English. At the training level it could perhaps become more of an interdisciplinary bridge between languages than it is. At present the teacher who has to teach English *and* a foreign language to the same class makes his own links — as do his pupils. Specialist teachers of English and of foreign languages could benefit by being more fully informed about the content and methodology of their colleagues' work. The dangers of expecting pupils to do something *better* in a foreign language than they can in English seem obvious — but are not always avoided. 'Think of a child then from a linguistically disadvantaged home coming into the primary school with his inadequate mastery of tenses in English. . .'[27] — but in so thinking we should be very clear what we understand by 'linguistically disadvantaged' and by 'inadequate mastery'. Do we not sometimes apply a double standard according to language? It is odd if this standard should ever be 'higher' for the foreign language than for the mother tongue. How do teachers of English view foreign languages for the majority? Are claims that foreign languages help English justified, or do English teachers feel with Taylor that '. . . unnatural skills invade the primary day. A recent example is the attempt to teach French from the age of eight upward. Here the teacher has an ally in the willingness — the gullibility if you like — of the young'[28]? Will they remain so gullible in the secondary school?

And finally what of the 'other' subjects? They are all users of English (and teachers of it as well), but how do they participate in the total effect of all language teaching? It has been said that 'Modern language teaching. . . is the only subject towards which the rest of the curriculum is not neutral, but positively inimical'.[29] If so, whose fault is this? Perhaps the development of European studies (with a foreign language component), involving history, geography and science, could lead to a more helpful concern about the value of foreign languages by the rest of the curriculum. On the

[27] Hawkins, E. W., in 'The position of modern languages in the secondary school curriculum', op. cit. p. 76

[28] Taylor, L. C.: *Resources for learning*. 2nd edn. Penguin Education, Harmondsworth, 1972. p. 15

[29] Hawkins, E. W., op. cit. p. 73

other hand one must beware of inventing a simplified notion of European studies merely to serve as a substitute for the real value of learning a foreign language. Perhaps as Sweet said 'The superficial study of modern languages certainly tends to deteriorate the mind, just as any other superficial study does. . .'[20] Clear and limited objectives may combat superficiality far better than wider aims which sound impressive but cannot be achieved in any practical sense.

[20] Sweet, H.: *The practical study of languages.* Dent, 1899. p. 278

2

Harold Rosen

A social view of language in school

It would be easy to begin in an innocuous even bland kind of way. For in the last two or three years we have had a succession of books and papers, some more readily accessible than others, which have elaborated in different ways that language, in spite of Chomsky, is a social act intimately interacting with the culture in which it is located or, as we have come to say, that we must consider language in its social context. I am thinking particularly of the collections by Gumperz and Hymes (1972), Fishman (1971), Giglioli (1972), Pride and Holmes (1972), and, more specifically related to education, Cazden, John and Hymes (1972), and various publications of the Open University.

From Chomsky we learned the cheerful view of language development which has now become very familiar, namely that virtually any child irrespective of its culture, its mother tongue, its class is 'born with the ability to master any language with almost miraculous ease and speed. . .' and is 'not merely moulded by conditioning and reinforcement but actively proceeds with the unconscious theoretical interpretation of the speech which comes his way'.

This powerful optimistic view was enormously helpful because it gave us an interpretation of language acquisition which was an antidote to the effects of other views which asserted that certain kinds of children were specially deprived in learning the basic grammar of their mother tongue. The more extreme of these views (and they are still vociferous) expressed the notion that young children from 'the lowest classes' could do little more than make animal noises. One should add that Chomsky's elaboration of his ideas also pointed to the probability that we learn our mother tongue almost entirely by listening to it and using it and not by direct instruction or intervention.

The sociolinguists brought a new point of view into the discussion, not so much new, perhaps, as newly systematised, re-asserted, researched and developed theoretically. However enlightening Chomsky's thesis might be, it is, the argument runs, based on too limited a view of language for it omits from consideration an essential quality of language and what it means to learn one's mother tongue.

'Recall that one is concerned to explain how a child comes rapidly to be able to produce and understand (in principle) any and all of the grammatical sentences of a language. Consider now a child with just that ability. A child who might produce any sentence whatever — such a child would be likely to be institutionalized: even more so if not only sentences, but also speech or silence was random, unpredictable. . . .

We have then to account for the fact that a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences, not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner. In short, a child becomes able to accomplish a repertoire of speech acts, to take part in speech events, and to evaluate their accomplishment by others. This competence, moreover, is integral with attitudes, values, and motivations concerning language, its features and uses, and integral with competence for, and attitudes toward, the interrelation of language with the other code of communicative conduct. . . .' (Hymes, 1971.)

In other words we now have a view not simply of *competence* (i.e. an internalised grammar) but of *communicative competence* which attempts to restore socio-cultural significance to learning the mother tongue. Indeed, it is a more comprehensive view of the essential nature of speech. Once again this seems a very positive advance for us. We are offered a theory which concerns itself with the very stuff of language actuality, of real people speaking to one another, rather than one which concerns itself with the 'ideal speaker-listener' and sentences concocted by grammarians. It is a view of language which attempts to incorporate all dimensions of variety — social and geographical dialects, degrees of formality, written and spoken forms, expressive and referential elements etc. Above all it accommodates interaction, the patterning of dialogue.

In education the benefits of this broader view would seem to be obvious. It discourages a simplistic and monolithic view of language as good, correct, standard etc. and asks us to look at any particular use of language as being the outcome of a set of always changing forces and evolved from a complete set of speaking rules based on setting, participants, ends or goals, form and content of message, key (manner), channel, code, norms, genres. In these terms the goal of language learning in school emerges not as simply 'getting better at English' but rather as increasing the repertoire of appropriate and acceptable ways of speaking and writing. In fact, it would be no exaggeration to say that 'appropriate' has been sewn onto the banner of the avant-garde in defiance of the old word 'correct'.

Productive as these ideas are I want to suggest that from an educational point of view they are seriously deficient. At this point, I hope, some of the blandness will disappear, as indeed it should. For it is the social aspect of language which touches us most quickly and directly. After all we ourselves are part of the social network. We are located in the system. If a theory tells us we are the speakers of elaborated code, it might give us a warm glow; if a research

finding points to us as the group most afflicted by linguistic anxiety, our hackles rise.

To return to communicative competence. What are the limitations of the theory as it has recently been developed?

1. In its apparently innocuous descriptiveness it would appear to be *value-free*. There sits the repertoire ready to be taken over item by item. But what value do we place on the separate items in the repertoire? What priorities do we accord them? This takes us back firmly to where we were in the old disputes. Do we give priority to the writing of business letters or of stories? Do we foster the competence required for formal debating speeches or informal small group discussion? Matters of this kind cannot be resolved by a set of sociolinguistic rules — and how we resolve them will depend on who we are, what we believe and what we cherish.

2. The idea of communicative competence is as yet almost entirely programmatic. It does not describe the complete repertoire or even basic repertoire required by a speaker of English. When items in the repertoire are carefully described, they demonstrate the theory as an instrument but to the educator they are relatively trivial and frequently esoteric e.g. how to ask for a drink in Subanum, or the opening gambits of a telephone conversation. This is not to deny that some studies have to have much wider significance even when their focus seems narrow, e.g. Brown and Gilman's *The pronouns of power and solidarity* (1960).

3. The terms *appropriate* and *acceptable* can all too easily be used as new disguises for the old 'correct' label. Hymes argues that there are 'rules for speaking' as well as 'rules of grammar' e.g. rules for opening a conversation and breaking off a conversation. But these are different in different social groups and in many schools there is at least the likelihood that two different systems will confront each other hostilely. The pupils' domestically and communally acquired rules for speaking may be frowned on or declared null and void. Once again we are confronted with values. Is the language of advertising appropriate? Or indeed all the language of unscrupulous manipulation? I am only arguing that communicative competence can easily turn into a brutal linguistic pragmatism — whatever in language is 'successful' is good.

4. What about the aesthetics of language? Here we have an inheritance which cannot be ignored. Men have been concerned for centuries to analyse what constitutes powerful language, eloquent, moving, witty, comic language. Unfortunately this legacy is strong for the written language (more particularly written *literary* language) and very weak for the spoken. Yet we all have our sense of the fluent speaker, the boring speaker, the man whose speech is full of vitality and the man

whose speech is drab and lifeless. Yet both the eloquent and the insipid may be conforming fully to 'the rules of speaking'.

5. The theory leaves unresolved controversial educational issues, the most contentious of which arises from sociolinguistic theory, namely that there are certain kinds of communicative competence, associated with a social class, which cannot or do not carry certain kinds of message, the very kinds which are prized in education.

In spite of the limitations I have outlined, it is worth stressing that some of the basic ideas connected with communicative competence can be built on and developed. They point towards a consideration of different kinds of communicative competence within the national community, expressing different social relations. Distinct social groups may draw on a national system but will also have rules of speaking of their own.

That is not, however, as everyone sees it. For the ideas in their present form can tolerate two quite opposed interpretations in the educational context — one which holds that many children (and their parents) have little or no communicative competence and it is the task of the school to provide it, and the other which holds that inevitably as part of their socialisation all normal children do have a highly developed system which like everyone else's can be extended.

All that seems very theoretical and speculative but it has at least taken me towards the sociolinguistic problem which people really have in mind when, in the educational setting, they talk of such things as the social roots of language. What they have in mind is working-class pupils in schools or certain working-class pupils usually euphemised as disadvantaged, deprived or inner-city children. For there is a profound belief that it is above all the language of these children which is a huge barrier to their learning in school. No less a person than Philip Vernon is now telling us that the mother tongue of such children 'is an ineffective medium for advanced education, communication and thinking' and dozens of other instances could be cited. Significantly no similar concern is shown in educational circles for Labov's finding that the lower middle class scored highest on his Linguistic Insecurity Index (Labov, 1966). I see no signs that funded projects are going to proliferate around this problem.

So we can turn now to the overriding anxiety of teachers, administrators, government ministers and even shadow ministers. This anxiety has a long history though it is only comparatively recently that one could make an academic living out of it.

When the Newbolt Committee made its report on the teaching of English half a century ago, it was generally regarded as a great achievement of liberal thinking. But look at this :

> 'The great difficulty of teachers in Elementary Schools in many districts is that they have to fight against the powerful influences of evil habits of speech contracted in home and street. The teachers' struggle is thus not

with ignorance but perverted power. That makes their work the harder but it must also make their zeal the fiercer. . . [this kind of speech] may be a negative quantity requiring great pains on the teachers' part to cancel out before any positive progress can be made.'

and

'Teachers of English sometimes complain that when the children come to school they can scarcely speak a word at all. They should regard this as an advantage.' (H.M.S.O., 1921.)

That will strike many as an outmoded viewpoint, perhaps held by a few backwoodsmen. It is not. We might note in passing that, unlike many contemporary statements, it does at least acknowledge the 'power', albeit 'evil', of vernacular speech. However, in 1963, the Newsom Report put the issue like this :

'Because the forms of speech which are all they require for daily use in their homes and the neighbourhood in which they live are restricted, some boys and girls may never acquire the basic means of learning.'

and

'There is a gulf between those who have and the many who have not sufficient command of words to be able to listen and discuss rationally, to express ideas and feelings clearly; and even to have any ideas at all. We simply do not know how many people are frustrated in their lives by inability to express themselves adequately; or how many never develop intellectually because they lack words to think and reason.' (H.M.S.O., 1963.)

These extraordinarily offensive remarks ('and even to have any ideas at all'!) go much further than the Newbolt Committee which at least recognised, while at the same time it feared, the power of working-class language. They suggest a deep-seated inadequacy implanted by inadequate lives. Moreover, we know that an official document of this kind does not emerge from the views of one or two individuals but from a serious literature and a serious consensus. There is indeed a consensus and only a few dissident voices are to be heard. It cannot be too often stressed that in viewing the language of the working class, most investigators are peering through the lens of their own language and culture. Anthropologists have known the hazards of this approach for a long time. We should have been warned. Thus working-class life and culture is seen as a distortion of their norms, deviation from their standards, deformation of what is right and good. Thus, too, the talk is always of deficit not difference.

More than this the whole literature of deprivation, including linguistic deprivation, springs not from sympathetic participation in the life being described, nor from informed awareness and insight, but from special researches which set out to find out what has gone wrong not what has gone right. The academic literature is of course esoteric and couched in suitably abstract terms but when it is translated into everyday educational literature, it becomes fairly crude and blunt. It must be very comforting to some people to discover that the

social and economic inferiority of millions is not due to anything inherently wrong with our society but to the way they talk to each other. Lest you think I exaggerate the typical posture let me take one example from sociological literature, Sugarman writing on *Social class, values and behaviour in school*:

> 'He [i.e. 'the lower status child'] is unable to express meanings of any complexity or subtlety, to indicate how one event depends on others, results from others, precipitates others; to convey intentions, motives or feelings other than the most obvious. He cannot express these shades of meaning and in his social milieu he does not hear them expressed by others.' (Sugarman, 1970.)

One has to read the whole paper to see just how consistently it shows every feature of working-class life to be negative and disabling. There are now a few studies, invariably and sadly always from the United States, which do attempt to get inside the situation from which a very different picture emerges (see for example Claudia Mitchell-Kernan, *Signifying and marking: two Afro-American speech acts* in Gumperz and Hymes, 1972, and Horner and Gussow, *John and Mary: a pilot study in linguistic ecology* in Cazden, John and Hymes, 1972).

I assume it is now generally agreed that we are not concerned with dialect, at least in this particular controversy, and that the old abuse thrown at dialect speech does not need to be taken very seriously, namely that it is debased, corrupt, lazy, ugly, ungrammatical and so forth. Those linguists who were prone to call urban dialects sub-standard have recently become more careful. In general there is a more widespread, tolerant attitude to dialect than there used to be, even a sneaking admiration for it. Perhaps there is wider recognition that dialect as such has nothing to do with the capacity to learn. Side by side with growing tolerance and understanding there is the ever-powerful drive to teach standard English and Received Pronunciation usually on the benevolent grounds of wider communicative intelligibility. This is presented innocuously as 'adding to the repertoire', 'making a child bilingual' etc. But there are enormous difficulties which cannot be evaded.

If you are going to replace, for certain purposes, one set of forms with another and give yourself to it single-mindedly, there is a good chance that you will teach children to be silent. You run the risk that they will lose confidence in the old without gaining confidence in the new. Alternatively they may end up with a grammar which you find more acceptable but with which they have little or nothing to say. In any case it should be borne in mind that the process has nothing to do with using language well.

But there is a greater difficulty which far transcends these, which turns on how the mother tongue relates to personal and social identity. Dialects are not isomorphic. What can be said in one dialect cannot be simply translated into another. To invite the dialect speaker to become a speaker of standard English, complete with RP, is to invite him into a terrain where he will always be at a disadvantage in the face of those born to it (the conversion syndrome). He will always be playing in an away match.

The exercise is doomed to failure, in any case, for most children. But we can succeed in making them despise their own speech, thus reinforcing a lesson which so many agencies ram home every day. We can create areas of doubt and confusion where none existed before. But as long as their own linguistic community continues to be the one in which they live it will win. Only if education lures them away from their own community can the operation begin to succeed.

As I have indicated, dialect is not the main line of attack on working-class speech these days. It is not so much the formal properties of their speech which are being criticised but the purposes for which they use speech. Broadly speaking it is argued that precisely those kinds of uses of language which schools are dependent on — rationality, universalistic meanings, the verbalising of principles — are absent from 'the restricted code'. Many people in education are now very familiar with the main thesis or with some version of it. I have attempted to show what I think is wrong with it (Rosen, 1972) and do not propose to repeat all that but I would like to stress a few points.

Like most theories of deprivation it turns on the effect of *home* and, in particular, the *mother*, though some attention is paid to the peer-group and work situation. It is puzzling, to say the least, to account for the disappearance of fathers, let alone grandparents and others. The assertions about the influence of the work situation (no power of decision-making, acting only on consensus views etc.) do not derive from observation let alone participation. Even Hoggart's sensitivity to working-class life does not encompass the realm of work (Hoggart, 1957). Yet this is probably the most difficult experience for middle-class people, including most teachers, to penetrate and understand. And it is a major question : how does directly productive labour affect the consciousness of those engaged in it? This is not solely a question of physical activity of certain kinds but also of the social relations set up in the course of that activity. It is difficult to exaggerate how ignored this question is.

Moreover, the working class or one large section of it is treated as an undifferentiated mass without a past, bereft of significant history. When I have transcribed, as I have just recently, tapes of a Welsh miner, a London docker, a Scottish shipyard worker, a lock-keeper and others, I am amazed that people can go on talking in the way that they do about working-class language as though they are dealing with a single identifiable object. The cultural history of the working class in this country often realises itself in language. It is, as yet, relatively unreported and unstudied, its richness and its poetry relatively unknown and neglected in spite of all the studies which claim to tell us about working-class speech. It is the strength of working-class speech which remains unexamined usually because it is assumed not to exist. This is all the more depressing because teachers do not have to be impressed by the inadequacies (supposed or real) of working-class speech. Everything they have ever been taught predisposes them to be aware of them, exaggerate them or invent them. What we have to learn now is how to make ourselves sensitive to what is positive,

to shift from the censorious and superior stance to an appreciative and responsive one; in fact, to do what we so often say our pupils should do, listen. And we have to do all this without losing ambition for our pupils, without abdicating from our task of increasing their power to use language more effectively, confidently and comprehensively.

I believe that vernacular speech offers to its speakers particular resources which, when used, render their speech uniquely eloquent and powerful. But this is almost entirely an intuition which I share with others. Little is known about it for the obvious reason that very few have cared to know. Much of education has been concerned with gentling the masses, teaching them obedience, a kind of decorum, respect for authority and all that. The old model is being seriously eroded these days, if for no other reason than that it does not work. It is not often enough recognised that an essential feature of that model was the toning down of vernacular speech. Control their language, control them. If there are to be new models they must include a radically changed attitude to language.

Note 1. I have not discussed the social aspects of literacy solely because the length of this paper meant my treatment would have been ludicrously brief. The topic obviously requires full-length treatment in its own right.

Note 2. The line of thought pursued in this paper is documented with transcribed tapes and other material in *Language and class workshop*, No. 1. Feb. 1974 (obtainable from 41a Muswell Avenue, London N10 2EH, 15p plus 4p postage).

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3

Peter Doughty

Towards an educational theory of language

What must we assume about the nature and function of language if we are teachers?

When I was first asked to write this paper I was a little concerned. It seemed to me that while I did think I had something to say about the problems of teaching a language to those for whom that language was their mother tongue I knew very little about the problems of teaching a foreign language. However, it seems to me that there is a point some way back from the activities and procedures of the classroom itself where these two activities meet, the point where both sets of teachers have to take account of language itself. At this stage in our understanding of language, we can make some fundamental assumptions about its nature and function, about what language means in the life of human beings and about how they use it in going about the business of being human : it is these assumptions that every teacher of language has to take into account if his actual practice is to be ultimately successful when face-to-face with his pupils. I might add that every teacher has to take account of the same facts because, as we all know, but do not always recognise in our actual practice, the primary medium of communication necessary to us as teachers is language itself. Whatever we teach, however we approach it and whatever we may try to do by using visual media, ultimately we come down to the fact that our practice depends upon the effectiveness with which we can realise our own linguistic potential as speakers of a language and the potential which all our pupils possess.

Let me return to my original point, however. It seemed useful to put before you a set of assumptions about the nature and function of language which must enter into all our thinking when we try to consider how best we can devise actual programmes of activity for the classroom, whether these are focused upon English or a foreign language. Let me begin by asking the most basic question of all, 'What is a language?' What are we pointing to when we use this fundamental term? In one sense, the question itself seems an enormity. It would take volumes to provide a fully adequate answer. In another, the question seems entirely redundant. We all know what we mean by a language, or we think we do. We use it. We observe its use. Our work is organised around our assumption that a language *is*, that it does exist as something we can examine and teach. Nevertheless, it is meaningful to ask this question in this

context, because we may be so focused upon the actual surface patterns of the grammar and phonology of particular languages that we overlook the more far-reaching aspects of language considered as distinctively *human* activity.

Let me begin by quoting from Wilhelm von Humboldt who says that language 'intervenes between man and nature acting upon him both internally and externally'.

In a sense, with these words, Humboldt says it all. He points to the fact that it is language and, by implication, language alone, that stands between the individual sentient self and his experience of the world : his reaction to people, objects, places, colours, sensations, meanings.

The moment we use the word 'meanings', we imply language. The whole question as to whether we can have 'meanings' without language; or whether we can share 'meanings' unless we use language; or what kind of 'meanings' we could have that *we know we have*, independently of any intervention from the language we all possess as well formed human beings, is a question that properly belongs elsewhere. What I want to point to is Humboldt's fundamental insight that it is *language* which mediates between our individual self and all that lies outside it, what I call our 'experience of the world'. When he says that language intervenes between man and nature, I think he is expressing a profound insight into the function of language in shaping us as individual human beings. What we experience, we relate to through the language we bring to bear upon it, so that, cumulatively, our possession of language means that our whole experience comes to be known to us through this language that we have. What this means for us as teachers is that human beings do not have a perception of the real world that they recognise as such unless it is mediated to them through their experience of language, and, as I shall argue, that experience of language is profoundly shaped by the social and cultural contexts in which it has been acquired.

What I want to focus upon is a small number of basic assumptions about language, which are implied by Humboldt's words and which, I believe, we must accept as the foundation for any educational theory of language that would do justice to what we now know about its nature and function. There are four of these basic assumptions that will concern us in this paper and I shall want to derive some conclusions from them concerning our view of pupils as language learners and users of language.

Let me begin by enumerating these four basic assumptions. Firstly, language is genetically programmed. This I would call the *biological* dimension. Secondly, language is, as Malinowski suggested, 'concerted human activity' and this aspect of language I would consider the *social* dimension. Thirdly, language is learnt at a particular time, in a particular place, a place which possesses a particular history. This is what I would call the *cultural* dimension. Fourthly, it is language we use to create ourselves : language is the primary agent in our development of a sense of self, our capacity to know ourselves as individuals. This I would call the *individual* dimension.

To say language is genetically programmed touches people on a particularly raw spot. I do not imply any kind of mechanical determinism, any kind of necessity which leaves out of account the human being as an active agent in his own destiny. Everyone would accept that what designs a human being is something that we call inheritance. We have argued long and bitterly as to the balance between the inheritance a man receives through the mechanisms of genetic inheritance and that which comes to him through his experience of the man-made medium of his own culture and society. When I refer to a *biological* dimension in relation to language I want to focus upon the fact that every human being is shaped by a design, written out in terms of the genetic code, *but*, and it is a big but, this code is potential only. What a human being is born with is a potential to develop in a certain way: to use two legs and two arms, to walk upright, to see bifocally and to have colour vision. Human beings are born with a number of genetically programmed potentials; other things being equal, they will develop the capabilities for which these potentials provide. Some of these capacities are immediately obvious to us, such as walking upright; others we have been less ready to recognise as capacities of this kind, and amongst them I would place language. I am suggesting that the work of the last thirty years requires us to accept our capacity to learn language as the product of a genetic potential of this kind. Just as we are born with the capacity to walk upright, so we are born with the capacity to learn language and it seems to me that if we are concerned with the teaching of language this is a fact of enormous importance. It is a fact that we ignore at our peril. It means that every well-formed human being that comes before us, and the vast majority of our pupils are, in these terms, well-formed human beings, is not only born with this capacity but has developed it successfully before we meet him in our classroom.

Let me move on to my second assumption, the dimension that I called *social*. I said that Malinowski spoke of language as 'concerted human activity'. It seems that here again is an insight of great importance for teachers. What Malinowski points to is that language is activity, language is the means by which things happen, the means by which we do things to other human beings and to ourselves. The most important fact about language being social is the fact that language is our means of relating to other human beings: language *is* interaction with others and the most important aspect of this is that we can only learn language through interaction with other human beings. Interaction implies a context, and where other human beings are involved, this context is necessarily social. What I am suggesting is that language is necessarily a product of social learning. We may be born with the genetic potential for learning a language, but unless we interact with other human beings we will not learn a language and we will not learn how to use it. In the last ten years, this may have become something of a truism in educational circles, yet I am not at all sure that we have imaginatively grasped, and related deeply to our practice as teachers, its full implications.

My third assumption follows logically from the second. If it is true that our language is initially a product of our interaction with other human beings,

then we can only acquire our language at a particular time, in a particular place. This is what I call the *cultural* dimension and I have in mind that our learning of a language is a function of our membership of a series of particular human groups, primarily our membership of a particular family and that family's membership of a particular community. Again, this is something that we have become very conscious of in the last ten years, but have not yet thought through in terms of practice in the classroom. When I use the word 'culture' I am not using it, as many teachers of English do, to refer almost exclusively to those products of human genius and creativity which we label 'high culture'. I am using it, as the anthropologists use it, to refer to all those intangible elements of which we are deeply conscious in our membership of human communities, but which we can only point to by giving them abstract names. A quotation from one of the founding fathers of scientific anthropology, Sir Edward Tylor, will help to show what I have in mind. Like the quotations from Humboldt and Malinowski, it seems to me to bring within the compass of one sentence all the things that we are trying to focus upon, and to do it with great exactness.

> Tylor suggested that culture is :
>
> 'that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities or habits acquired by man as a member of society'.

All these abstract entities do have something to do with the lives of individual men and women, every one of whom possesses strongly held attitudes and assumptions about such matters as belief or morals or law, and about very many other 'capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society', so we can say that each one of these terms that Tylor uses implies some kind of valuing of experience or events in the world. When we talk about a man's experience of his culture, therefore, we are talking about the values, attitudes and assumptions which go to make up his view of the world, and hence his means of interpreting his experience of it.

You may well ask how this view of culture connects with my third assumption : that language is learnt at a particular time, in a particular place, possessing a particular history. In one sense, the connection is very complex and as yet an area in our study of the function of language which remains very hard to penetrate; in another, the connection is very simple and direct. When we talk about a particular time, a particular place possessing a particular history, we are talking about men and women living together, and achieving a particular kind of continuity in their living, the continuity we can call community. All these abstract entities that Tylor lists are a product of that shared living. Cumulatively, human beings living together in communities construct beliefs and establish moral codes : they make art, they invent knowledges, they promulgate laws, they perpetuate custom. I am suggesting that language is the primary means by which the continuity of such communities is achieved. The most fundamental of all those '. . . other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society' referred to by Tylor is language itself. It is the most fundamental, because it is the capability that enables man to acquire all

the others, yet it is itself, like belief, art, knowledge or law, a cultural artifact, something that men make and perpetuate through their need to create a context for shared living. Hence language has built into it the values, attitudes and assumptions of that particular time, that particular place, possessing a particular history, in which it was learnt. Consequently, we must accept that pupils come before us possessing not just language but a view of the world enshrined in the language they have learnt. Until we can face up to the full significance of the fact that language is the product not only of social learning but of cultural learning also, much of our teaching as teachers of language will simply be irrelevant.

So we can now say that our pupil is a person biologically designed to learn language, who is set in a social context in which he interacts with other human beings; in the process he learns a language, and in learning that language he learns also a culture, the culture of the particular community into which he is born. In these first three assumptions I have been standing outside and looking in on the individual human being in his social and cultural context. When I come to my fourth assumption it is as though I completely reverse the perspective : I am standing inside the individual human being looking outwards and I want to consider the significance of the phrase 'act internally' in the quotation from Humboldt.

There is a sense in which we can consider all three assumptions I have put forward so far as aspects of the nature and function of language which act upon the individual externally. What we are concerned with in my fourth assumption is language acting upon him internally and philosophically, and practically this is the most difficult of the four to grasp. The point of departure must be the sense that, whatever twentieth-century writers and painters and psychologists say to the contrary, we believe that we are *individuals;* each one of us has this ineradicable feeling that he is a self. Many people feel, however, that to talk about the individuated self in 1973 is to show an unwillingness to come to terms with what we have learnt about the nature of human personality over the last half century. I would answer those sceptics by saying that in our practice as teachers we need to act *as if* the pupils and students we meet face-to-face are indeed individual sentient selves. Whether or not such an idea of the self exists for others, for us it is a necessary fiction. If the idea of the individual self *is* a myth, a bourgeois invention, as I have been told, then we have to follow the practice of so many other specialists in this century and accept that it is a myth we have to invent in order to do our job.

My fourth assumption would suggest, however, that we can be a little less sceptical if we approach the question from the direction of our concern for the part language plays in the life of man. I think we are entitled to say, in the light of what we now understand about the process of acquiring language, that it is bound up with the parallel and complementary process of growth in our awareness of self: in fact that it is through our experience of language, our use of language in relating ourselves to others and in interpreting our experience of the world to ourselves, that we become aware that we have a self.

Up to this point I have talked as though language were somehow 'given', an entity taken over unmodifiably by those who use it. It seems to me that this is a very wrong conception of the nature of language. Just as language enables us to make a society, to make a culture, and each one of us to make a self, so language itself is made. I think this point was put very sharply by Booth: '[the child or, as I am suggesting, man is] ... an inherently curious, inherently purposive creature, a creature whose thoughts will be passionridden and whose feelings are bound with cognitions... a creature made by and for symbol exchange, a creature made in and through the language which by his own irrepressible needs he helps to create'.[1] I want to draw particular attention to the latter part of this statement. The idea of a creature 'made by and for symbol exchange' and 'in and through language' links up very closely with Humboldt's idea that it is language that intervenes between the world and our experience of it: that the critical symbol exchange which makes us human beings is our handling of that symbol system we call language. When Booth goes on to say that man is a 'creature made in and through the language which by his own irrepressible needs he helps to create', it seems to me that he is focusing our attention upon the fact that language is both given and made. We learn a language that already exists for us to learn, but we add to it and modify it in the process of using it for our own ends.

Language is certainly 'given' in the sense that we do not each one of us invent our own language. One of the myths that we should never have out of our minds as teachers of language is the myth of the Tower of Babel. Babel symbolises what happens when we ignore the fact that language is given, is public, is a system of agreed and shared meanings. At the same time, if we stress this to the exclusion of the idea that language is made by the human beings who use it for their own ends, it is impossible to do justice to the enormous variation and idiosyncrasy in each individual's use of what *is* given: and to the fact that language is not at all static, but involved in a process of continuous change.

My fourth assumption, therefore, opposes to the other three the idea of language as the particular and personal possession of the speaker, the individual self who uses his language to make sense of the world *for him*. Given then that we need to accept these four assumptions about the nature and function of language, how do they relate to our practice in the classroom? How can they guide us, when we are formulating a policy for action? It seems to me that there are three major conclusions about our pupils that we can draw from them.

Firstly, we must accept that every well-formed child will possess a language system and the capacity to use it effectively in those social and cultural contexts with which he is familiar and feels at home, before he comes to school. When we say that language is genetically programmed, we are saying

[1] Booth, Wayne, 'English: more than just a subject.' *Times Educational Supplement*, 26.11.71, p. 4

that language has survival value for human beings; and therefore, that the ability to use language is built into the everyday functioning of the well-formed human being. We cannot give credence to any form of the all too popular common-room idea that pupils do not have language, or possess only a debased and fragmented version of their own mother tongue. How, and in what ways, pupils' knowledge of the *use of their language* might be limited, is another and different question. We must accept that pupils enter school having an operational command of a mother tongue; and that, if we are talking about secondary pupils, they have a very considerable experience of surviving as well-formed human beings by the use of that mother tongue.

Our second conclusion must be that this operational command of a language has been learnt in a highly specific context, human, cultural and social, and that this holds true independently of whatever assumptions we may make about the social class or cultural origins of the pupils before us. The context in which the middle- or upper-class child learns its language is just as specific, just as bound by the cultural and social history of that context, as is the context in which the child from the poorest working-class home learns his. It is a sad vulgarism of our time to assume that it is only the working-class child who learns his language in a particular and local social and cultural context.

Our third conclusion must be that each child's awareness of himself as an individual human being is bound up with the language he has learnt and the context in which he has learnt it. This is to say that every single child that comes before us as a pupil has a personal and idiosyncratic history as a language learning and language using human being; and that any programme we may devise for language activity in the classroom, be it native or foreign, must take this fact into account. The corollary of this is that if we attack a pupil's language, if we show him that we think the language he brings to us is unacceptable, or inadequate, or in some sense or other totally unsuited to the needs of the classroom situation, then we attack *him*, and we must not be surprised if he has the audacity to defend himself. As many of us know from bitter experience in the classroom, his chief means of defence is apathy and his more disturbing and damaging means is a violent rejection of anything we might attempt to do in the context of the school. What the pupil brings to us in the form of his cumulative experience of the use of language is his personal identity as an individuated human being: unless we can take account of this in whatever we do in the classroom all our efforts are likely to come to nothing.

What I have done is to outline a number of fundamental assumptions which seem to me true about the nature and function of language. I have added, briefly, three major conclusions that we are compelled to draw from them when we consider pupils as users of language. I have carried the

argument further and related it to the actual choice of activities and procedures elsewhere[1].

What we need is a concerted effort upon the part of a large number of teachers, working together in different places and different educational contexts, to follow through these implications for themselves and discover how they might change their practice. It is my belief that the most practical thing we can now do, as teachers of language, is to work in this way. Unless we are ready to relate our day-to-day practice to what I am calling an educational theory of language, we are never likely to move beyond an arbitrary choice of what to do in the classroom, because we will only understand our problems as teachers of language in so far as we are prepared to consider them as problems that arise out of the nature and function of language itself.

[1] Doughty, P. S., and others: *Language in use*. Edward Arnold, 1971. (Schools Council Programme in Linguistics and English Teaching.)
Doughty, P. S., and Geoffrey Thornton: *Language study, the teacher and the learner*. Edward Arnold, 1973. (Explorations in Language Study.)
Doughty, P. S.: *Language, 'English' and the curriculum*. Edward Arnold, 1974
Doughty, P. S., and E. A. Doughty: *Language and community*. Edward Arnold, 1974. (Explorations in Language Study.)

4

James Britton

English in the curriculum

Let me begin by saying that I do not believe the English teacher is there to 'teach' English children their mother tongue. On the contrary, I believe children learn their mother tongue in most, if not all, lessons on the timetable. I am encouraged in that belief by the fact that before they ever come to school children have learned to speak, and have done so without pedagogy playing any part in the process. In other words, they learn the mother tongue by using it to serve their own purposes; what they have achieved with its aid by the time they are five is a substantial grasp on what life is all about. It seems to me essential, therefore, that the years of schooling, in all areas of the curriculum, should continue that process, extend and intensify it. This is to see the mother tongue as a means to successful learning operations, and to value what is learned *through* language beyond anything that may be described as achievement *in* language. There is no paradox in suggesting that the task of assisting children to achieve more by means of language will demand considerable linguistic and pedagogical expertise on the part of all teachers, and that in so far as it is successfully carried out it will result also in increased ability in the mother tongue on the part of the children.

This was not the view held by a teacher of Zulu as a mother tongue I met in a South African secondary school some ten years ago. The Department of African Education had introduced the mother tongue as the language of instruction in the primary school, where at the same time the children were learning English and Afrikaans. These two official languages became in the secondary school the medium of instruction for all subjects. However, one lesson a week remained on the secondary school curriculum for work in the mother tongue — a kind of slender bridge, one might hope, between the learning of infancy, the primary school syllabus, and the more or less alien studies of the secondary school. I sat through one Zulu lesson and asked the teacher afterwards what she had been doing. 'Prepositions and conjunctions', she said. And *why?* 'So that they can get the constructions right.' So Zulu, far from acting as a life-line, had become one more language to be wrong in. Perhaps we see our own mistakes more easily when others make them : concentrate on the language

and not on what it achieves for the child and you take one step towards treating the mother tongue as we have treated Latin in school — as a language performance in which it is very difficult to be right and very easy to be wrong.

The stress upon what language achieves for the user — that is to say, an *operational* view of language in school — is nothing novel as applied to the teaching of English. It has been developing in classrooms in this country over a period of at least forty years; it stood the severe test of the Anglo-American Seminar on the teaching of English held at Dartmouth, New Hampshire, in 1966 and emerges strongly in Dixon's interpretation of that seminar, *Growth through English*.[1] Theoretical studies and research have expounded the view, extended it, modified it at some points without changing its fundamental character.

I must first try to indicate what theoretical underpinning there is for the general claim that the mother tongue is a means of learning (in all subjects) and is best learnt by focusing upon the learning rather than the language; and secondly, on that basis, to suggest the principles upon which the responsibilities of the English teacher have now to be defined. If language is learnt in every lesson, what remains to be done in English lessons?

The German philosopher, Cassirer[2], writing in the nineteen-twenties, pointed out that, of all the animals, man responds with systematic *in*directness to the signals he receives from the world about him. All creatures have systems of nerves bringing in such signals and other systems of nerves carrying out their responses. In man, however, there is as it were a third system shunted across those two — the 'symbolic system'. In Cassirer's words[3]:

> 'This new acquisition transforms the whole of human life. As compared with the other animals man lives not merely in a broader reality; he lives, so to speak, in a new *dimension* of reality. There is an unmistakable difference between organic reactions and human responses. In the first case a direct and immediate answer is given to an outward stimulus: in the second case the answer is delayed. It is interrupted and retarded by a slow and complicated process of thought. . . . No longer can man confront reality immediately; he cannot see, as it were, face to face. Physical reality seems to recede in proportion as man's symbolic activity increases. Instead of dealing with the things themselves man is in a sense constantly conversing with himself. He has so enveloped himself in linguistic forms, in artistic images, in mythical symbols or religious rites that he cannot see or know anything except by the interposition of this artificial medium.'

From the incoming signals, then, man *represents to himself*, cumulatively, what his world is like to him, and his responses are thenceforward mediated by that world representation. Thus, what is from one point of view a storehouse

[1] Dixon, John, *Growth through English*. 2nd rev. edn. Oxford University Press, 1971
[2] Cassirer, Ernst, *Philosophy of symbolic forms*. Bruno Cassirer, 1923-29
[3] Cassirer, Ernst, *An essay on man*. Yale University Press, 1944

of representations of past experiences is from another point of view a body of expectations regarding the future. Accumulating a 'retrospect' he projects therefrom a 'prospect'. His response to signals from his immediate environment is to generate a hypothesis from past experience and put it to the test in the present encounter.

Langer's *Philosophy in a new key*[1] sets the theory out in detail. Her 'new key' is the notion of man as a 'proliferator of symbols', man as possessing a new need over and above the biological needs he shares with the other creatures, the need to symbolise. Sapir[2] makes the point again, and places language among the means by which we represent the world to ourselves :

> 'It is best to admit that language is primarily a vocal actualisation of the tendency to see realities symbolically... an actualisation in terms of vocal expression of the tendency to master reality not by direct and *ad hoc* handling of this element but by the reduction of experience to familiar form.'

And a French philosopher, Gusdorf[3] has made an epigram of the whole idea : 'Man interposes a network of words between the world and himself and thereby becomes the master of the world.'

Language, then, is only one way of representing experience, but it plays a key role as a means of organising and storing representations made in other modes. Bruner[4], following Piaget, has set out the three principal modes, genetically developed in this order : *enactive*, a representation in terms of movement-cum-perception; *iconic*, a representation in terms of perception freed from its ties to movement; and *symbolic* or linguistic. Vygotsky's *Thought and language*[5] is a brilliant exposition of the idea that language introduces a 'principle of order' and so becomes a means of organising our representations in any mode.

The American psychologist, Kelly[6], making an entirely fresh approach, takes the scientist as his model for man and sees 'learning' not as a special kind of human behaviour (as the behaviourists do), but as behaviour at its most typically human. Man is born a predictor, forever framing his hypotheses from past experience, submitting them to the test of actual events, and modifying his predictive apparatus in the light of what happens. Man as predictor, in other words that curiosity is the form that adaptive behaviour takes in the young of the human species — this is an essential contribution to the view we are taking of the process of learning.

[1] Langer, Susanne K., *Philosophy in a new key*. Harvard University Press, 1942
[2] Sapir, Edward, *Culture, language and personality*. University of California Press, 1961
[3] Gusdorf, Georges, *Speaking*. Northwestern University Press, 1965
[4] Bruner, J. S., and others, *Studies in cognitive growth*. Wiley, 1966
[5] Vygotsky, L. S., *Thought and language*. M.I.T. Press, 1962
[6] Kelly, George, *A theory of personality*. Norton, 1963

Introducing his version of the theory of representation, Kelly writes :

> 'Man looks at his world through transparent patterns or templates which he creates and then attempts to fit over the realities of which the world is composed. The fit is not always very good. Yet without such patterns the world appears to be such an undifferentiated homogeneity that man is unable to make any sense of it. Even a poor fit is more helpful to him than nothing at all.'

In recent years the 'new key' has been used to bring new approaches in the study of sociology and a valuable new dimension is added to our understanding of what is involved. The sociological emphasis, naturally enough, is upon interactions between people and the co-operative building of a common world. Where the psychologist has looked at an individual successively construing his confrontations with the world, the sociologist focuses upon situations, encounters between people, and looks at the way individual representations fit into the jigsaw of a social reality, and how in turn the corporate system of meanings acts upon an individual's modes of representing the world. Berger and Luckmann's book *The social construction of reality*[10] is divided into two main parts, 'Society as objective reality' and 'Society as subjective reality', and while the second of these is concerned with what we have described above as 'representation', it cannot be understood in isolation from the first. Man constructs the social world, but 'the product acts back upon the producer'. Man (and I suppose here the emphasis is on the group — and over a period of time) constructs the social world but what he constructs is as binding upon him thenceforward as features of the natural world; hence man (though my emphasis here is on the individual) is himself a social product. Berger and Luckmann point out that two mechanisms operate to keep this dialectic relationship between the objective and the subjective aspects of society. 'Legitimation' is the name they give to the processes by which society makes its demands known and felt by individuals; and 'reality maintenance' is used for the means by which the individual takes into himself society's meanings, the means by which the individual becomes 'socialised'. They stress here the importance of language :

> 'The most important vehicle of reality maintenance is *conversation*. One may view the individual's everyday life in terms of the working away of a conversational apparatus that ongoingly maintains, modifies and reconstructs his subjective reality.'

The effect of this convergence of thinking from many quarters has been enormously powerful. To retain a subtle sense of its implications in working out its practical application to the task of the teacher is enormously difficult, and this brief account must illustrate some of the pitfalls.

One general effect is to set up, alongside a sense of the importance of language as communication, a sense of its value *to the user*. With a communi-

[10] Berger, P. L., and Luckmann, T., *The social construction of reality*. Penguin Books, 1966

cative purpose, that of sharing experience, the speaker *shapes* experience, makes it available to himself, incorporates it, so shaped, into the corpus of his experience. Children using language in school are busy structuring their own experience at the same time as they weave into its fabric the experiences of others.

It is an essential feature of this idea that in successively representing to ourselves our contacts with the world we are not simply making ourselves into receptacles for past experience but are actively concerned to maintain an ever-improving predictive apparatus. Our orientation is to the future rather than the past. Behaviour, as Kelly has shown, is experimental, and our past experiences provide the hypotheses. Thus every new experience must be taken as a potential challenge to the established order of our past experience, and every experience must be followed by modification or confirmation of that order. In general, we make the necessary adjustments as we proceed. If, on the other hand, what happens is *too* unlike our expectations, we shall not be able to adjust 'in our stride'. We participate as best we can, but when the event is over we are left with the adjustment still to make. And this we ordinarily do by going back over the experience — in mind, in talk, or (if we are young enough) in make-believe play. Our re-enactments are likely in some degree to distort the experience in the direction of what is acceptable to us, or intelligible to us.

This process of re-enactment in order to 'come to terms' is essentially similar to the process by which we enter into imagined experiences — in day-dreaming or in reading fiction — and other people's experiences as we listen to travellers' tales or read accounts of their adventures. In terms of our abstract model we might put it this way : given that man constructs a representation of the world *in order to operate in the world,* an alternative course is then open to him — he may operate *directly upon the representation* without seeking outcomes in the actual world. These two cases I would call acting in the role of *participant* and the role of *spectator* respectively. To be in the role of spectator is to generate hypotheses without the present intention of putting them to the test.

Harding,[11] the British psychologist, made a distinction of this kind well over thirty years ago. He took first the example of the actual spectator looking on at a building site or a street accident. He takes up this role, Harding suggested, because what he sees 'discloses or makes more vivid to him some of the possibilities of his surroundings'. He is not simply concerned with perceiving and comprehending, for what he sees engages his feelings, his sense of values; he takes up what Harding calls a 'detached evaluative role'. Of course, when we participate in events we evaluate in order to decide how to act, but 'it is as onlookers that we can most readily endure the penetration of general principles among our sentiments'. The spectator's evaluating represents a concern for 'general principles', for what in the final analysis we believe about the world and feel about the human condition. We evaluate, as spectators, more openly

[11] Harding, D. W., 'The role of the onlooker', *Scrutiny* VI(6), 1937

and more amply. 'And for this reason, if we could obliterate the effects on a man of all the occasions when he was "merely a spectator" it would be profoundly to alter his character and outlook.'

Harding goes on to see day-dreaming and fantasying as 'imaginary spectatorship', gossip about events as 'social imaginary spectatorship', and claims that what is afoot in this case is essentially a traffic in values. In telling his tale, the speaker offers his evaluation of the events narrated and invites evaluation from his listener in return. Such a testing-out, or sanctioning, of our value systems provides what Harding has elsewhere[12] called a 'basic social satisfaction'. I have no doubt that a good deal of what Berger and Luckmann have called 'conversation' would consist of such gossip about events, and that this sanctioning of our value-systems plays an important role in 'reality maintenance'.

Our final step, for which Harding also prepares us, is to bring into this same category the work of the novelist, playwright and poet. Literature constitutes a highly developed form of 'written language in the role of spectator', and represents at its most sensitive level our social traffic in values.

The spectator is free of the practical and social demands made of a participant and we have suggested that one of the uses to which he puts that freedom is to concentrate upon the evaluation of experiences recalled or imagined. Let me add now another use: both speaker and listener are free to attend to the utterance itself in a way they are not when the utterance is part of a social interaction of a participant kind — that is to say, is directed at some outcome in the actual. The forms of the utterance — its sounds, its diction, its structure — the pattern of the events narrated, the pattern of the feelings aroused, all these may become the objects of attention in a way they cannot do when the utterance is a means to a participant end. The matter of feelings is of particular importance. As participants in the world's affairs, our feelings tend to be sparked off in action; as spectators we are able to savour their quality *as feelings*. As participants we are caught up in a kaleidoscope of emotions; as spectators we have these feelings in a perspective. The movement from frustration to anger, from fear to relief — the rise and fall of tensions of many kinds — constitute an important part of the form that a writer creates in a work of literature.

The distinction between language in the role of participant and in the role of spectator is in a very general way that between work and play: between language as a *means* — to buy and sell, to inform, instruct, persuade, analyse, theorise and so on — and an utterance for its own sake, no means but an *end*, a voluntary activity that occupies us because in itself it preoccupies.[13]

On this distinction we[14] have based a scheme for distinguishing the prin

[12] Harding, D. W. *Social psychology and individual values*. rev. edn. Hutchinson, 1966
[13] For a fuller account of the participant/spectator distinction, see Chapter 3 of my *Language and learning*. Pelican, 1972
[14] With acknowledgements to my colleagues in the Schools Council Writing Research Project: Nancy Martin, Dr. Harold Rosen, Tony Burgess, Dennis Griffiths, Alex McLeod and Bernard Newsome

cipal functions of language as it is used in school. The scheme has three main categories :

Role of Participant		Role of Spectator
TRANSACTIONAL	EXPRESSIVE	POETIC

Following Jakobson[15] and Hymes[16], we have assumed that in any extended utterance a number of functions is likely to be operating but that a hierarchy among them can usually be discerned, so that it is possible to see one function as dominant (or, indeed, to perceive either a switch in dominant function or a shifting situation in which no hierarchy is established). 'Function' is seen as 'typical', that is, selected from a known repertoire by the speaker and recognised as such by the listener. This is to invoke the notion of 'universe of discourse' as Lyons[17] has described it :

> 'I consider that the idea of context as "universe of discourse" (in Urban's sense) should be incorporated in any linguistic theory of meaning. Under this head I include the conventions and pre-suppositions maintained by "the mutual acknowledgement of communicating subjects" in the particular type of linguistic behaviour (telling a story, philosophizing, buying and selling, praying, writing a novel, etc.).'

'Expressive', the central term in our scheme, is taken from Sapir, who pointed out that all ordinary face-to-face speech is mainly expressive, only to a limited degree referential. It represents an utterance that 'stays close to the speaker' — that is, it is fully comprehensible only to one who knows the speaker and shares his context. The governing conventions might be interpreted as above all an assumption that the listener is interested in the speaker and not solely in what he has to say about the world. Thus, its purpose in any situation is to explore the 'being with', and it is loosely structured to follow a speaker's preoccupations. As writing, it approximates to 'written-down speech', and clearly for this reason it is an advantageous starting point for one who has not yet internalised the patterns of written language. Developmentally, the expressive is a kind of 'matrix' from which differentiated forms of writing (or speech) will be evolved.

The more fully an utterance meets the demands of some kind of participation in the world's affairs, the nearer will it approach the transactional end of the scale; the more fully it satisfies the spectator-role demands, the nearer it will move to the poetic end. The two processes are very different. Let

[15] Jakobson, R., 'Linguistics and poetics' in Sebeok, T. A., *Style in language*. Wiley, 1960
[16] Hymes, Dell H., 'The ethnography of speaking' in Fishman, J. A., *Readings in the sociology of language*. Mouton, 1968
[17] Lyons, John. *Structural semantics*. Blackwell, 1963

us take 'informing' as an example of a language task, a way of participating, a type of transaction: as expressive speech or writing changes to meet the demands of this task, it will become more explicit, that is, it will supply more of the context, will reflect a concern for accurate and specific *reference;* it will seek the kind of organisation that most effectively carries out such a task, and will exclude the personal, self-revealing features that might interfere with it.

To satisfy in full the demands of the spectator role, on the other hand, an utterance must become 'a verbal object'. Language forms and the forms of whatever is represented will become the direct object of attention. What is afoot is evaluation, so that the feelings, attitudes, beliefs of the speaker are paramount, and what is included in the utterance may be highly 'personal'. It will be made intelligible to an audience of strangers by the complex and subtle internal structure of the artefact (that is, private experience is given 'resonance' within the structure). A poetic utterance may be said to be above all a particular kind of self-presentation, not so much the embodiment of local or particular feeling as a glimpse into the lifetime of feeling of an individual[9].

Clearly the transactional category needs to be broken down in accordance with the kind of transaction undertaken. We have made two main subcategories, the *informative* and the *conative*. The latter we have divided further into *regulative* (where compliance is assumed) and *persuasive* — a major concern of classical rhetoric. The informative we have subdivided by applying Moffett's[10] analysis — his scale of abstraction of the relation of a writer to his topic. He sees four categories, the first most closely resembling the structure of external reality, the fourth most closely resembling the structure of man's mind: recording, reporting, generalising (analogic), and theorising (tautologic). We in fact have made a finer subdivision, using seven categories for his four.

For the final complication, we have to note that transactional utterances are 'contextualised' — made our own — in piecemeal fashion. We take what fragments interest us (from such an utterance as this paper, for example), reject the rest, build new connections for ourselves between and around the fragments. But the poetic writer must resist such piecemeal contextualisation. His 'verbal object' is a thing deliberately isolated from the rest of reality; to respond, the reader must contextualise only *after* he has reconstructed the object in accordance with its internal complexity. This idea of 'global contextualisation' lies behind the sub-categories added to the poetic function. Novelists do put over 'a message', for example, and that message may be classified in accordance with the kind of transaction involved, but to operate the conventions of the poetic a message must be communicated in and through the total verbal construct — the artefact. This is the point of classifying a novel such as Orwell's *Nineteen eighty-four* as 'Poetic (persuasive)'.

[9] Langer, Susanne K., *Mind: an essay on human feeling*, Vol. I. Johns Hopkins Press, 1967

[10] Moffett, James, *Teaching the universe of discourse*. Houghton, Mifflin, 1968

The novel feature about all this, and the feature I would stress above all, is the fact that in assigning language functions the first cut comes between the spectrum 'Expressive to Transactional' and the spectrum 'Expressive to Poetic' — the distinction, that is to say, between participant and spectator uses of language. It is also the feature most heavily criticised, particularly by the linguists.

Turning to the situation in school, I would begin by emphasising the educational importance of expressive language. Expressive speech is the medium for personal exploration, for the first drafting of our ideas, for the tentative shaping of experience. It is the product of a relaxed situation, which is in turn the product of relationships of mutual confidence. Feed-back is at a maximum in expressive speech, hence its value in promoting co-operative learning. What we must say to teachers in general is that children need to get their own tongues around the material of their learning — listening and reading are not enough. And while the unit of operations remains the whole class of thirty or more, there will never be enough expressive talk.

Expressive writing is important because in using it the writer has most readily available the linguistic resources he has recruited in speech. Progress towards both transactional and poetic writing comes as these resources, by a kind of metabolism, take in the forms of the written language encountered in reading. A great deal of the writing done in the middle years should lie within the expressive band, and attempts to hasten development are likely to distort it. It is only too easy (by the use for example of models deliberately imitated) to cut the writer off from the scope and vigour of his individually acquired language resources — to lose, in fact, the writer from the writing. This, at the same time, is to reduce the opportunities he has of learning by using language.

If language is the instrument for all learning, it is the spectrum from expressive to poetic language that must lead to the kind of achievement we look for in English lessons. For the rest, the development of transactional language will take place mainly in science, history, geography lessons and the like, whether the teachers recognise this fact or not.

A young child's curiosity is all-round looking and his language comes to serve that curiosity. That learning of this kind should continue in school is part of my intention in describing what I have called 'an operational view'. Clearly, however, a subject curriculum creates a situation for learning that differs in important ways from 'the school of experience'. Certain areas of common curiosity become channelled into socially developed ways of analysing experience. The child's curiosity about the natural environment, for example, becomes channelled, eventually, into scientific and geographical studies. Apprenticeship in these ways of analysing usually means a good deal of learning what other men have discovered before a student can generate knowledge for himself. However, heuristic methods of teaching a subject (harnessing the exploratory uses of language) may set up a kind of compromise between 'discovery' and more traditional kinds of learning, and experiments in integrated curricula may yet give us quite new modes of learning in school.

I suggest that English also has an area of operations, but of a rather different kind. It might be roughly defined as the area of experiences in which one child differs from another, as distinct from the areas where he shares a common curiosity. I mean his personal relations with his parents and family and other people — and beyond that his individual stance vis-à-vis the world, and all the hopes and fears and fantasies that he generates in face of it. Moreover, it is at this level of experience that all other interests come together to be harmonised with and built into his one experienced world.

The pursuit of a common curiosity, in the many forms that it may take in the curriculum, has its own transactional forms of language. The kinds of personal experience I have referred to above may, of course, be categorised and studied analytically — using the transactional language of sociologists or psychologists. But the need to be met in English lessons is quite a different matter: here we must preserve the unique personal quality of the experiences in order to satisfy an *assimilative* need, a concern for the wholeness and coherence of an individual's total world view — a concern, that is to say, for the context into which a child, a man, must fit every new experience he meets. For such a purpose, it is language in the role of spectator we require.

In planning a curriculum I believe we need to work for a balance between the two uses, spectator and participant. Alfred Schutz, in his celebrated essay 'The stranger'[20], has suggested that in a problematic situation we need to undertake a double process to arrive at a solution, an outward-looking and an inward-looking enquiry. Maxine Greene[21], commenting on Schutz, describes the first of these processes as the isolating of some part of the meaningless flux of events, making it 'a theme', something worth questioning in its own right. And to do this, the enquirer 'brackets out for the time being his subjectivity'. The second stage, however, is the converse process: here he must explore within himself the sources in his past of his concern with the 'theme'; to do this, he 'releases himself into his own inner time'. By these means, 'he may succeed in moving back from what is given — exploring both the inner and the outer horizons of the problem, making connexions within the field of his consciousness, interpreting his own past as it bears upon his present'.

Putting the matter more crudely, as human beings our ways of looking are rooted in past experience: to find a new way of looking we have to go back and re-interpret. What I have suggested is that language in the role of spectator is a 'gear' we need to go into from time to time so that new discoveries — made, usually, with the help of language in the participant role — may be assimilated, may modify, without distorting, our total world representation.

[20] Schutz, Alfred, 'The stranger: an essay in social psychology' in *School and society*. Routledge & Kegan Paul for Open University, 1971

[21] Greene, Maxine, 'Curriculum and consciousness', *Teachers' College Record*, Vol. 73(2), December 1971

It is not surprising that the area of operations I have claimed for English lessons turns out to be the area in which 'Literature' operates. But this does not signal a retreat to the old conception of English as dispensing our cultural heritage; literature is in the picture on the same terms, and for the same reasons, as are the spectator-role uses of language by children.

For the rest, the development of transactional language will take place mainly in science, history, geography lessons, social studies, and so on. And this is true whether the teachers of those subjects recognise it or not. By the nature of their training and interests, English teachers are likely to be the ones who have to make the first move — and we know many schools where they are actively seeking allies among teachers of these other subjects. I think it is fair to say that as English teachers we have tended to regard teachers of a foreign language as having less concern with the cause we are promoting than have the teachers of most other subjects in the curriculum. Other contributors, however, may take up this issue and perhaps throw fresh light on the overlap of our interests.

5

Eric Hawkins

Modern languages in the curriculum

This paper attempts an answer to the question 'What contribution can study of a modern language make in the middle years of secondary education?' A complete answer would require a separate account for each different language. This is not attempted here for reasons of space and the argument is confined to considerations that apply generally to commonly taught languages.

Modern languages have never had an easy ride in the school curriculum. When something over 100 years ago, together with science and modern history, modern languages began to gain a more established place in the timetable, they had to face the entrenched opposition of the classics. This was Gladstone in 1861 giving written evidence to the Public Schools Commission[1]:

> 'What I feel is that the relation of pure science, natural science, modern languages, modern history, and the rest, to the old classical training, ought to be founded on a principle, and that these competing branches of instruction ought not to be treated simply as importunate creditors that take one shilling in the pound today because they hope to get another shilling tomorrow, and in the meantime have a recognition of their title. This recognition of title is just what I would refuse; I deny their right to a parallel or equal position; their true position is ancillary, and as ancillary it ought to be limited and restrained without scruple as much as regard to the paramount matter of education may dictate. But why, after all, is the classical training paramount? Is it because we find it well established? Because it improves memory, or taste, or gives precision, or develops the faculty of speech? All these are but partial and fragmentary statements, so many narrow glimpses of a great and comprehensive truth.... The materials of what we call classical training were prepared, and we have a right to say were advisedly and providentially prepared, in order that it might become, not a mere adjunct, but (in mathematical phrase) the complement of Christianity in its appli-

[1] Quoted in *The position of modern languages in the educational system*, Report of a Committee appointed by the Prime Minister. 1918. (Chairman, M. S. Leathes, CB)

cation to the culture of the human being, as a being formed for this world and for the world to come.'

Long after modern languages were admitted to the curriculum (despite Gladstone's warning that it was against the Almighty's wishes) teachers continued to debate why and how they should be taught. One reason why modern language teachers incessantly argue about methods is that their subject is so uniquely difficult. A modern language differs from all the other subjects studied at school in two ways :

(i) The modern language is the only subject in which the 'model' of performance is not the teacher. In all other subjects the 'model' (e.g. of understanding maths problems, of knowledge of geography, of piano playing, of cricket playing) is the teacher of that subject or at least some exponent of the skill who has travelled the same road of learning as teacher and pupil must travel. This is not the case with modern language study. Here the model of performance and the exponent of the culture to be studied through the language is not the teacher but the native speaker, who possesses an intuition for linguistic appropriateness to which the non-native-speaking teacher, however academically qualified, must defer. The teacher's *Sprachgefühl* as well as his accent is constantly challenged by the native speaker's. No other subject in the curriculum invites into the school staff room each year native-speaking assistants who have an effortless, nearly perfect mastery of the performance which the teacher tries to teach, and who are exemplars of the culture which teacher and pupils will explore together.

(ii) The modern language is the only subject towards which the rest of the curriculum is not 'neutral'. As the pupil moves from (say) his maths lesson to geography or games, the maths teacher does not expect the other teachers positively to reinforce what he has been trying to teach, but he can at least rely on them not actively to undo his efforts. The modern language teacher is not so fortunate. He spends his 40 minutes working hard by dialogue, free composition, reading, role playing to establish a few tender seedlings of names, structures and syntax patterns in his pupils' repertoire of speech habits before the bell goes. At that point the frail seedlings are subject to a gale of the English language in which the pupil fights for survival throughout the day, in his other lessons, in the cafeteria, on the football field, across the tea-table, in front of the 'telly'. When he returns next morning the language teacher finds his frail seedlings lying flattened and lifeless. He revives them and tenderly coaxes them like a sensitive gardener. After 40 minutes just as they are standing up and responding the bell rings and the process begins again. It takes able pupils 750 hours (of highly paid teacher's time) to reach 'O' level by this uneconomic route. It will be wise not to draw any facile conclusions from the analogy but at least we should note the learning problems involved for the pupil.

The foreign language element in the curriculum has lately had to meet

a new challenge (the opposite of Gladstone's) from the advocates of a view of education which sees the school as a sort of prison designed by the so-called 'middle-class' teacher and 'imposed' upon children from working-class homes.[2] The argument seems to be that because in the parents' culture the study of a foreign language has not previously had a place, any attempt to teach a language to working-class children is both unjustified and bound to fail since it challenges as in some ways inadequate the culture of the home and of the peer group.

This view of the school is commonly held with sincerity and advocated persuasively by those who are attracted by the notion of 'deschooling' society and setting children free from the 'shackles' of compulsory schooling and a curriculum containing compulsory elements. In this debate foreign language study has come to be cast in the role of enemy number one, the 'sore thumb' in the new and 'liberated' approach to 'schooling'.

If we are to see our way through the muddle of half-truth and rhetoric that has characterised this debate, we need at the outset to examine and to try to define unambiguously the two concepts : 'schooling' and 'teaching a foreign language'.

What is 'schooling' for? For some teachers (and many parents) the question never arises. To take an example, the Pakistani (Muslim) teacher and his pupil's family (not to speak of the Imam of the local mosque) take for granted a culture enmeshed in the revealed truth of the Koran. The task of the teacher in this religious and cultural setting is to interpret the revelation of the Koran to his generation. Ultimately all questions about the teaching programme are answered within a philosophy rooted in revealed truth. The same must be true presumably of the convinced Christian teacher of whatever denomination.

The teacher who looks for some justification of his view of the role of the school other than divine revelation is forced in the end to make an essentially political choice. His view of school and of the curriculum must reflect a choice of political objectives. For reasons which in this essay must be very summarily stated, my own view is that education is for freedom. This follows from the choice that our community has made in favour of democracy. Education's prime role is to make people as free as possible within the limits of an evolving democratic community.

If education is for making people optimally free we need to ask what are the hindrances to children's freedom. A hundred years ago, before school attendance was compulsory, children were free from the protective custody of the school system to work in factories and down the mines. The debates in Parliament on the factory acts of the nineteenth century revealed the way in

[2] cf. 'Protective detention', the title of a review by Ian Lister in *New Society* (15.11.73) of the Open University volumes 'Readings in urban education' : 'One of the theoretical defences for schools is that modern life — industrial and urban — is so complex that children can't enter safely into it without first undergoing a long stretch of "protective detention" ' and 'schools are discriminatory devices against ordinary people'.

which the market exploited children, sending them into the mines even at the age of five to hand buckets, knee-deep in water, with chains round their waists.

There are more subtle threats to freedom: ignorance, prejudice, the sway of fashion and of the peer group, failure to see through the hidden persuasion of the media, lack of the skills to operate in the environment. If a compulsory school system has since 1870 helped to protect children from some of the pressures of market forces and from parents' inability to defend them against would-be exploiters, the curriculum within the school is about freedom from the subtler constraints on judgement, taste and understanding. The role of the school is to be a *refuge* within which freedom from such outside pressures is guaranteed and within which the strength, skills and practice in making the choices which freedom in a democracy require are learnt.

Of course the wise and sensitive teacher will wish to work as far as possible with and through the home and the parents that the child loves and knows best. But the home values are not sacrosanct; the curriculum must not chain the child in his limited environment.

Consider a current tragic dilemma, that of education in present-day Belfast. What is the school challenged to attempt in such a situation? Fifty years ago when the present writer first went to school in Liverpool that city was deeply divided into dogmatic camps by the same catholic-protestant obscurantism as disfigures Belfast. For an adolescent boy brought up to equate 'Rome' and 'catholic' with all that was treacherous and unclean, the school journey into Spanish literature, especially the poetry of Luis de León, the *Autos (El gran teatro del mundo)* or the drama (*La vida es sueño*) and especially the many journeys to Spain and its people that study of Spanish entailed, was a liberation that no other part of the curriculum could have achieved. A later appraisal of the tragic loss to Spain of the brilliant Moorish civilisation destroyed by the southern march of the Catholic kingdoms was another step on a long journey. To point a schoolboy's camera at the graceful Moorish brick tower in Seville and at the ugly dark mass of the Catholic cathedral that leans against the tower where once the graceful mosque stood, then to go inside the cloisters and read on the wall the wise and warm Cervantes comment on what his fellow Christians had done: *¡Voto a Dios que me espanta esta grandeza!* — this was indeed to spread the schoolboy's wings after Liverpool in the twenties.

Another way of exemplifying the liberating role of modern language teaching is to try to envisage what schools would be like as communities of people if we were to remove modern languages from a central place in the school curriculum, relegating the subject (as has been proposed) to vocational further education courses or to Saturday morning special classes for enthusiasts. I have tried to express this loss, in a Schools Council discussion last year[1], in the following way:

'We should lose from the community [and] from daily contact with

[1] 'The position of modern languages in the secondary school curriculum.' *Audio-Visual Language Journal*, vol. 11, no. 1, 1973

pupils (and parents) a group of teachers who are unique in that unlike any other teachers in the common room they have, as a normal part of their training, been abroad. They have both studied and worked in another culture, most of them for a full year... the other teachers... went from school to college and back into the school again. Only the modern language teacher, as part of [training for] his trade, moves out of his culture, gets under the skin of another [often] to earn his living in it... if we lost that element in our school common room, and with it the informal discussion that it makes possible of values in our community and comparisons with other ways of life, we should be in danger of having very parochial school communities. Add to this the fact that our discipline is the only one which makes our pupils examine (and visit) another culture and invites back again ... representatives of other cultures. Ours is the only discipline that brings regularly into our common room speakers of the other languages as colleagues to work side by side with us.... It is the only discipline too, which doesn't simply give our pupils information about foreign culture but gives them in the language the key, the technique, to ask and answer the question, "Is it true?". My defence of modern languages would partly rest on the fact that, at the same time as it introduces the pupil to asking questions about the foreign speech community which he is beginning to get to know, all the time it is saying to him, "and eventually, when you can put the questions, and when we take you there, you'll be able to ask, 'Is it true?' ... you will see if the picture painted is the picture that you see in reality".'

It is the language teacher's contribution at its best actively to challenge pupils to make this critical comparison, to judge what he has tried to offer. Could other subjects claim as much?

Perhaps we have already gone some way towards defining the special role of foreign language study in the curriculum of a school system whose prime aim is to set children optimally free within a democracy. But we must meet a further objection from those who clamour for a curriculum rooted in what they call working-class culture (though they studiously avoid defining what this means). It is that the liberating experience (as in our example of the Liverpool protestant schoolboy's adventure into the Spanish catholic drama and through a further looking glass into Moorish culture) is only real for the few who master the foreign language at an advanced level. For the less able verbally or the less motivated, it is suggested, the foreign language has nothing to offer. This objection may be based on a misunderstanding of what we mean by foreign language teaching in the middle years. Rather than indulging in generalisations let me briefly describe three approaches to foreign language teaching that are currently being developed by a university language teaching centre in co-operation with local schools.

The first example is work with a fourth form learning French in a comprehensive school. The pupils of very modest ability have been placed in a non-GCE set. Their motivation is restricted and they will probably never master French to the point where they can read it fluently and with satisfaction. The

university tutor who teaches them four times a week takes the eight graduate students of his tutorial group to each lesson. Each student is attached to a group of three or four pupils and most of the work is done in these groups. The text-book used is centred on the town of Rouen. From discussion of the town there has grown a plan to go and see what it is like. Already three of the students have paid a short weekend visit to Rouen armed with lists of points on which information is required by the pupils. Next term the tutor will go for a long weekend accompanied by two pupils elected by the class or their representatives to bring back their own first-hand report on the place. In March the whole class plus students will go and spend a week in Rouen, making a cost-of-living comparison with York. Thirty objects ranging from an 1100cc motor car to a pound of butter will be priced in York. The identical list will be priced in Rouen by each working group of pupils, with the students helping their groups in the work. Meanwhile much of the learning in the classroom in York in the intervening months will be concentrated on practising the dialogues and vocabulary needed to 'survive' in this comparative cost-of-living study. The pupils' parents have been involved in the project, having been asked to select the 30 objects which their children are going to enquire about in Rouen.

My second example is the voluntary intensive holiday course for catching-up in French and German. About 60 fifth-formers who have lost their way in French or German are invited to attend a week's course at the university in January at the end of the Christmas break. The pupils are tutored on a 1:2 ratio by graduate students from the university. On the first morning the pupils' learning difficulties are diagnosed and then the rest of the week is spent in individual tuition with the object of restoring confidence and motivation to learn. The scheme is now in its sixth year. Each year far more volunteers apply than can be accommodated, despite the fact that the volunteers have to give up holiday time for the work. Only pupils whose performance level is extremely low can hope to be accepted. One secret of the success of this small experiment seems to lie in the individual attention given to each pupil's learning difficulties. This is only made possible by the use of large numbers of students, working under the guidance of experienced tutors.

The student, whether from university, college or sixth form, is also the key figure in the third example of language teaching that I wish to quote. This is the intensive summer school of English for immigrants and slow readers[1], in which volunteer student tutors work in small teams under the guidance of trained teachers, each tutor being responsible for one or two children. In the project which I know best, about 150 tutors, mainly students, spend three weeks in August in such an intensive 'school', teaching by means of dialogue, shared activities and exploration of the environment some 250 Pakistani and Halifax-born children aged between 6 and 13. The sight of some 50 to 60 children aged 15 and 16 who had attended the summer school in previous years, but were now too old, screaming and beating on the school door to be let in, on a sunny

[1] For a full account see *A time for growing*, edited by Eric Hawkins. Community Relations Commission, Russell House, Russell Square, London, 1971

day in August within sight of other children playing cricket on the grass nearby, was a reminder that for such children at least school even in the August sunshine was more of a refuge than a prison. To the role of the student as the intermediary in the teaching/learning equation we must come back at the conclusion of this paper.

It will be apparent perhaps, from these few practical examples, that the liberating role of language teaching in school need not be confined to the academically able child only. The questions which we must try to answer are :

(i) How far down the ability range can such teaching usefully extend?
(ii) What specific learning problems do the less able pupils encounter?
(iii) What contribution can a modern language make and how can the teacher attempt to overcome the learning problems involved?

In the second part of this paper some tentative answers are offered to these questions.

Who learns a foreign language?

There has in the past decade been a considerable extension of language teaching, both vertically down the age range and horizontally across the ability range. The pilot experiment ('French from eight') in the (comprehensive) primary schools required of LEAs in the 13 'pilot' areas a commitment that all their pupils, regardless of ability, should study French. There was a further commitment that the secondary schools affected would provide continuity of instruction in French, again for all pupils regardless of ability. Outside the 13 pilot areas, some 90 'associate areas' came to be involved in the experimental teaching of French in primary schools. It has been estimated that by 1972 French was being taught to some 35% of all children of junior school age[5]. As the pupils reached the age of 11 and transferred to secondary schools, teachers and heads (and some parents) became aware of a fact that very few had previously faced, namely that language study had hitherto been restricted to an elite. It amounted in 1964 to perhaps 25% of secondary pupils[6]. To return for a moment to Gladstone's rear-guard action, we can now see that whereas his other 'competing branches of instruction', science and modern history, have long since been accepted as proper elements in the curriculum for *all* pupils of secondary age, modern languages had only won a toe-hold by 1964. The three pupils out of four who ten years ago were not offered a foreign language at school were those who were selected at 11+ by a largely verbal test for secondary modern schooling. The march of comprehensive reorganisation and the arrival in secondary schools of 'comprehensive' cohorts in the pilot experiment, have contributed to raising the proportion of pupils who are offered a modern language to nearly 60% — though many of these pupils (probably at least 65%) will study the language for only two or three years in secondary school

[5] DES: *Reports on Education*, no. 75. HMSO, 1972.
[6] M. V. Salter, HMI. Report to Council of Europe Symposium, 1973. (Mimeograph)
[7] Ibid

before dropping it when options are allowed in the timetable.

What is now being questioned is the usefulness of extending the study of a modern language to pupils outside the traditional grammar school range of ability. There are some teachers who would frankly wish to return to the pre-1964 figure of one in four pupils studying a modern language. There are some who while welcoming the extension to the present figure of two-thirds would not wish to extend it any further if it meant offering a language to pupils whose ability to read and write English was weak. On one point all who have thought about the problem would probably agree, namely that the extension of the ability range across which languages are offered in secondary schools calls for a realistic re-thinking of the objectives for pupils of widely differing aptitudes and interests, and a great deal remains to be done in this area.

This case has been argued most thoughtfully in recent papers by Salter and by Hornsey. The whole problem was explored in some depth at a symposium organised by the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research in 1972[8] and Hornsey and I have since carried on our own friendly discussion, from opposing points of view but agreeing about objectives, in further papers[9]. There is no need to go over the ground of this debate again since the papers are readily accessible. In the present context it may be more useful to try to propose some lines along which language studies for less able pupils may move in the immediate future.

Nevertheless two things need to be said here to those who would wish to put the clock back and restrict foreign language teaching to the one pupil in four who was offered it in 1962.

Firstly, this would mean, in a comprehensive school, a curriculum determined by the social class of the pupil. There is ample evidence[10] that ability to learn French correlates highly at the age of 11+ with parental occupation. But this same correlation holds good for mother-tongue learning. It would be quite unacceptable for most teachers to place children in a modern language stream in their comprehensive school according to a measure of verbal ability which correlates with an environmental influence such as the job category of the parent. Furthermore the evidence that Dr Burstall has produced showing the effect of teachers' expectations on pupils' success and the correlation between teachers' expectation and the social class of the pupils argue strongly for keeping open the curriculum options as long as possible.

Quite apart from the injustice of selecting pupils for modern language streams on the basis of verbal ability which so clearly reflects environmental influence, to do so would be to deprive large numbers of children of an

[8] *Teaching modern languages across the ability range.* CILT, 1972. (Reports and Papers 8.)

[9] 'Teaching modern languages across the ability range'. *Modern Languages in Scotland,* no. 1, May 1973

[10] Clare Burstall: *French in the primary school: attitudes and achievement.* National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales, Slough, 1970

experience which they, more than their more fortunate contemporaries, positively need. It is an experience which no other part of the curriculum can offer — namely the opportunity to make a fresh start on the essential learning task of matching categories of concepts to linguistic symbols. This is a process which, for a variety of reasons, has not gone well in their mother-tongue learning. Such children are sometimes described as suffering from 'linguistic deprivation'. The term is a misnomer and has led to some misunderstanding. Labov for instance has sharply challenged Bernstein's interpretation of linguistic 'deficit'.

This controversy has generated considerable confusion. Teachers who thought they recognised in their pupils' speech the 'restricted' code and the 'implicit' language tied to its context that Bernstein described in his earlier papers as typical of lower-class pupils, were disconcerted to learn Labov's conclusion from his tape recordings of negro children in New York that 'the fallacies of verbal deprivation theory are so obvious that they are scarcely worth exposing' [11]. The truth probably is that both Bernstein and Labov, in describing the surface features of children's speech, were not looking at the real problem that language poses for disadvantaged pupils.

Learning problems of the less able

It is probably not so much that they do not possess the rules of the syntax of English but they lack confidence that the language will work for them. As for vocabulary, the attaching of names to concepts, they have not been encouraged at home to match effectively linguistic symbols to conceptual categories to construct a model of their environment which will work with precision and accuracy.

There seems little doubt that the process of categorising concepts and arranging them into hierarchical sets (animal, dog, terrier) can proceed some way without language, as Oléron and Furth, working with congenitally deaf pupils, have shown, but language does make a decisive contribution and for some children the matching of language symbol and concept goes awry. It is worth considering for a moment why this happens.

The ability to do this matching of linguistic symbol with the real world, which is the 'calculus of thought' in Bruner's phrase, seems to be learnt mainly through hours of unhurried dialogue between the child and an adult who is able to give undivided attention to the child's comparatively inaccurate matching. Roger Brown and his co-workers have described some important aspects of this essential dialogue. Douglas Barnes has sensitively analysed the language problems of secondary school pupils who have been denied such practice at matching words to concepts.

[11] W. Labov: *The logic of non-standard English*. Georgetown University Press, 1969. (Georgetown Monographs on Language & Linguistics, 22.) Reprinted in *Language in education*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972. (Open University Set Book.)

The role of the parent in the very early stages may be critical. Brown has warned against concluding from his observations of parents' 'expansions' of children's approximations to the grammar any direct correlation between frequency of parental 'corrections' and the speed with which the child masters successive syntactic rules. What rather seems to happen is that the child acquires the syntax and the match of vocabulary with the real world by constant experiment. It is adult *feedback* which motivates and shapes this experimentation. It may well be that parents differ in their effectiveness as linguistic informants partly in the degree of feedback they have the time, energy, or interest to give the child. There is however another way in which parents' effectiveness may vary.

It is important to remember that for the child's dialogue with his adult language informant to be effective it is not sufficient for the adult to possess the sounds and patterns of the language. Saussure was probably right to insist that the mastery of syntax of the spoken language in itself may be a comparatively trivial intellectual accomplishment. The effective adult language informant must also possess the *concepts* — she (generally the mother) must have categorised her conceptual world with some precision and refinement if, in dialogue with a child, she is to help match linguistic symbols to a conceptual map which will prove to be effective as a learning tool.

It is thus not at all certain that comparison of one child's language with another's will be very revealing if it confines itself to measuring the relative complexity of sentences, use of pronouns etc. or extent of vocabulary. What is needed is a measure of the precision and discrimination with which the language is matched to a conceptual model of the environment.

The point may be clarified if we take a practical example from a stage in language acquisition commonly called the 'holophrastic' stage when the child (aged between 18 months and 2½ years) uses 'one word sentences'. Madame Tabouret-Keller of Strasbourg has described her own child aged nearly two years, who used the sentence /**lo**/ in six quite different contexts :

1. when asking for water to drink
2. when it is raining
3. for everything that is wet
4. when the lavatory is flushed
5. when a bath is being run, as a question meaning 'Is Daddy up?'
6. on seeing a glass filled with coloured liquid.

The linguistic symbol here was simple, its learning posed no very great intellectual problem. To compare two children simply according to their having acquired or failed to acquire such a piece of language would tell us little. But the complexity of the categorising of the environment that is implicit in the use of the sentence /**lo**/ by this particular child is obvious. The *match* for the time being between linguistic symbol and the real world is a very crude one. In time the child will have to make the match more exact and discriminating if he is to use his language as an effective tool for categorising his increasingly complex verbal environment.

Even when he is adult he will find that the language matches the real world only approximately. The English-speaking adult for instance happily speaks of :

(a) *learning* the cello
(b) *learning* poetry
(c) *learning* history
(d) *learning* wisdom etc.

Almost nothing that one could say about the process of learning in (a) could be true of the process in (b), still less true of whatever is involved in (c) (which would need very careful definition even if historians could agree — and what is a historian?), while the learning involved in (d) must be something very different from the other three. Again the language is a pathetically crude match to the categories of concepts that it evokes. Learning the language is a small intellectual step. Matching it to reality is a lifelong task which few intellects can even partially master.

It is manifestly a task of enormous difficulty to devise a measure of the relative effectiveness of this matching process. Yet it appears that this is what we need, a sensitive measure of what some linguists are calling 'communicative competence'. It is towards this that the work of Douglas Barnes and Jim Wight and others is pointing. We may well find when we have a sensitive measure that children's communicative competence correlates closely before they go to school with the communicative competence of their language informants in the home. This at least seems to be suggested by the statistics of class-biased learning failure. It can be summed up in the graphic phrase of Hess and Shipman : 'The meaning of deprivation is the deprivation of meaning' [12].

The contribution of the modern language

It is part of my argument for modern language study for all pupils, and I realise that it will seem to some to be an audacious claim, that it can at its best make a contribution to this essential learning process. It can do this in three ways :

(i) The child who during his early schooling has opted out of the class dialogue can be coaxed back into the conversation when all start level in the new language. It is as if everybody turned over a new page and in the new matching of symbol to real world we all begin again from scratch. Furthermore, in the very process of matching modern language symbols to concepts in the real world, many uncertain and blurred concepts already met via the mother tongue take on a new precision. Of course very much depends on the teacher and on relationship in the classroom. I am presupposing in the teacher an infectious enthusiasm, a warm heart and a sensitive ear for the muffled

[12] R. D. Hess, and Virginia C. Shipman : 'Early experience and the socialisation of cognitive modes in children'. *Child Development*, vol. 36, no. 4, 1965, pp. 869-86

signals some pupils make — the qualities that go to make the good language teacher, whether in the kitchen or the classroom.

(ii) The modern language, by taking the learner outside his mother tongue, helps to liberate him from the handicap of the monolingual. The monolingual person is unaware of the arbitrariness of the language symbols he uses. Because he has known no others, he takes for granted that there are no others. He confuses the word and the concept. This is the 'magical view of language'. As Yuen Ren Chao[11] reminds us primitive peoples believe that putting a curse on somebody's name could harm his person. The word becomes the thing. It does not require a prolonged study of the foreign language for the liberating lesson to begin. Even the early learning of the sound system can be a valuable corrective to the parochialism and insularity which initially scoffs at or is afraid of any speech which is different from the local dialect. The critical attitude to language is a lifetime's study. But it must begin. There must be a start to looking beneath the surface of words. It is possible but less easy to do this if we are confined to the mother tongue.

(iii) A more precise and unique contribution of modern language study to cognition and to communicative competence is indicated in a suggestive passage in Vygotsky's *Thought and language*[12]. Briefly summarised the argument is as follows:

> Vygotsky distinguishes between the child's 'spontaneous concepts' and his 'scientific concepts', between the concept 'brother' (say) and the concept 'exploitation'. The spontaneous concept is unconscious, the scientific concept is one which the child is conscious of having made and one which he can discuss objectively and critically. The two kinds of concepts interact:
>
> '... Mastering a higher level in the realm of scientific concepts also raises the level of spontaneous concepts. Once the child has achieved consciousness and control in one kind of concepts, all the previously formed concepts are restructured accordingly ...'
>
> 'The child becomes conscious of his spontaneous concepts re-

[11] Yuen Ren Chao: *Language and symbolic systems*. Cambridge University Press, 1968. 'Monolingual persons take language so much for granted that they often forget its arbitrary nature and cannot distinguish words from things. Thus, primitive peoples often believe that putting a curse on somebody's name could actually harm his person. Persons unused to foreign languages tend to find something perverse in the way foreigners talk. Even Oliver Goldsmith could not get over the perversity of the French, who would call a cabbage "shoe", instead of calling a cabbage "cabbage". The story is told of an English woman who always wondered why the French call water "de l'eau", the Italians "dell'acqua" and the Germans call it "das Wasser". "Only we English people," she said, "call it properly 'water'. We not only call it 'water', but it is water."'

[12] L. S. Vygotsky: *Thought and language*. M.I.T. Press, 1962. (First published 1934, posthumously, but suppressed in 1936.)

latively late; the ability to define them in words, to operate with them at will, appears long after he has acquired the concepts. He has the concept (i.e., knows the object to which the concept refers), but is not conscious of his own act of thought. The development of a scientific concept, on the other hand, usually begins with its verbal definition and its use in non-spontaneous operations — with working on the concept itself. It starts its life in the child's mind at the level that his spontaneous concepts reach only later. . .'

'A child's everyday concept, such as "brother" is saturated with experience. Yet, when he is asked to solve an abstract problem about a brother's brother, as in Piaget's experiments, he becomes confused. On the other hand, though he can correctly answer questions about "slavery", "exploitation", or "civil war", these concepts are schematic and lack the rich content derived from personal experience. They are filled in gradually, in the course of further schoolwork and reading. One might say that the *development of the child's spontaneous concepts proceeds upward, and the development of his scientific concepts downward, to a more elementary and concrete level.* This is the consequence of the different ways in which the two kinds of concepts emerge. The inception of a spontaneous concept can usually be traced to a face-to-face meeting with a concrete situation, while a scientific concept involves from the first a "meditated" attitude toward its object. . .'

'*The influence of scientific concepts on the mental development of the child is analogous to the effect of learning a foreign language*, a process which is conscious and deliberate from the start. In one's native language, the primitive aspects of speech are acquired before the more complex ones. The latter presuppose some awareness of phonetic, grammatical, and syntactic forms. With a foreign language, the higher forms develop before spontaneous, fluent speech. . . The child's strong points in a foreign language are his weak points in his native language, and vice versa. In his own language, the child conjugates and declines correctly, but without realising it. He cannot tell the gender, the case, or the tense of the word he is using. In a foreign language, he distinguishes between masculine and feminine gender and is conscious of grammatical forms from the beginning. . .'

For the modern linguist Vygotsky's suggestion that the *effect* of learning a foreign language can be compared with the influence of scientific concepts is obviously of great interest. This early suggestion of Vygotsky's offers a possible explanation of a phenomenon that many language teachers have observed — namely the positive feedback of modern language study on the effectiveness with which the mother tongue is used, and on cognition across the board. There

has been so little work in the field of measuring the effect of foreign language learning on cognition that it is impossible to do more than quote anecdotal evidence[15]. Experience of teaching children of less than average IQ in a secondary modern school near York over a period of seven years has satisfied me that even though their command of the language remained modest, the dialogue required by the study had a beneficial effect on their general willingness and ability to learn and their confidence in using language to solve problems. In a very different context I have observed very able pupils from manual workers' homes whose primary school record was not impressive, who found in modern language study the route to high academic achievement. For such pupils of course the subject offers the great attraction that it takes the student into another culture where prejudice or snobbery about his social background or father's occupation or schooling counts for nothing when he is operating in his new 'persona'.

Going to meet our neighbours

My defence of our subject's place in the curriculum, especially for less able children, would be incomplete without some reference to the importance of finding out about our neighbours. In a polyglot world in which increasingly no nation can be an island unto itself the school programme must surely attempt to fill in as accurately as possible the blank space on the map of Europe occupied by the countries whose fortunes are now increasingly bound up with ours. I would personally distrust attempts to do this via such routes as 'European studies' which often degenerate into little more than 'quiz' lists of disconnected facts. The language spoken by the foreign speech community is surely what gives coherence to a study of what sort of people they are.

Above all language study is study of what people say and write. It tends to bring us into touch with people. At its best it promotes essentially educational visits and exchanges, duly prepared and carefully followed up.

Two dogmas considered

Consideration of these aspects of language study has lately been sidetracked by a rather uncritical acceptance of two dogmas about which some scepticism would have been healthy. One states that the sole purpose of modern language study is to be able to communicate in the language, and the other that there exists a 'critical age' (pre-puberty) for second language learning.

If the first dogma is accepted it is clear that the child who 'fails' has wasted his time. Hornsey has stated this case clearly in his papers referred to above. I do not share this view since, for the reasons I have tried to explain, I would not confine the objectives of foreign language study so narrowly, nor

[15] See the experiment by C. I. C. Estacio in Manila reported in *The psychology of second language learning*, ed. Pimsleur and Quinn, Cambridge University Press, 1969, pp. 189-94, which suggests that learning a foreign language 'has a direct effect on the development of the cognitive processes'.

would I wish to define failure at modern language learning by criteria so patently more rigorous than are used in judging failure at (say) history or English.

The second dogma appears to be an extension (for which there is no experimental or theoretical justification) of the hypothesis examined at length by Lenneberg[14] that there exists a 'sensitive' or 'critical' period for acquisition of the mother tongue, coinciding with the period between 2 years and puberty during which the child's brain is (a) growing rapidly, (b) progressively losing 'plasticity' (i.e. the capacity of one area of the cortex to take over functions normally associated with other areas), (c) progressively differentiating the functions controlled respectively by the two hemispheres. The theory of critical periods for learning has lately been questioned by Professor Clark of Hull and others. Whatever the evidence may be concerning mother tongue learning, there is no reliable evidence of a critical period for second language learning except in so far as acquisition of pronunciation is concerned. Here young children do seem to have an advantage and adults rarely acquire a new sound system entirely free from interference by the mother-tongue habits.

However, with regard to acquisition of vocabulary and syntax, to memory, both short- and long-term, and to concentration, all factors important for second language learning, it seems, as Carroll[15] has suggested, that learning capacity increases at least up to the age of 18 or beyond. What seems to be crucial is the factor of *motivation* to learn and it is this factor which probably explains the speed at which for example the young children of immigrants acquire a second language, compared with their parents.

Implications for the curriculum

What all this seems to suggest for curriculum planning in the early stages of language study is that the potential of the years 9 to 13 should be exploited for the learning of the sound systems not simply of one of the languages of our European neighbours, but of several. I would think it might be worth sacrificing at this stage any attempt to read or write a single foreign language in return for a quite disciplined and serious attempt to *pronounce* several languages. The spoken form of each language might be studied for a year. Considerable use would be made of simple dialogues (shopping etc.) and singing and learning verse by heart would have an important role. It might be worth while to experiment in the introduction of a simplified phonetic 'European' alphabet to support the learning.

It should be remembered that we cannot predict at the age of 9+, or even 11+ or 13+, which of several European languages any particular pupil will need in later life. The Dutch or Swedish teacher can safely predict that all his pupils will later need the world vehicle language, English. It makes sense for

[14] E. Lenneberg: *The biological foundations of language*. Wiley, 1967
[15] J. B. Carroll in *Languages and the young school child*, ed. H. H. Stern. Oxford University Press, 1969

all his pupils therefore to start English at 9+. For us, because we possess the world vehicle as our mother tongue, the ultimate need of a foreign language by any individual learner is less predictable. Not until the watershed of career choice is passed will it begin to become clear which second language will be most useful. No simple analysis of vocational need could therefore serve to determine which particular language should be learned at 9+ or 11+ or 13+ by any particular learner. Other criteria than national language needs must guide curriculum planners in the middle school. The phonological foundation suggested would possibly enable the eventual choice to be made less blindly.

Because the Swedes, for example, can predict that all pupils (and teachers) whatever their eventual vocation will need English it makes sense to insist on English as a compulsory element in the training of all Swedish teachers. This enables them to meet the staffing needs of a programme of 'English from 9' in Swedish schools. We can make no such prediction and the solution to the problems of staffing 'French from 8' is not open to us. My solution starts from the question : What can be predicted? The answer is : that one or other of the languages of our European neighbours will be studied at secondary level. I therefore propose that the phonological groundwork will be laid before the 'plastic' period (8-12) is over. It is this mastery of the sound systems of several languages that could be taught to all, or most, teachers in college. It would be the same skill that a radio or TV announcer must possess. The teacher's task could of course be greatly eased by the provision of suitable taped material, games, songs etc.

At the secondary level, if the full potential of foreign language study is to be exploited, two developments seem to be required.

(a) Firstly a new subject called the 'Study of Language' should be introduced into the secondary school. It would encourage pupils to examine the function of language as an aspect of group behaviour, to learn about language acquisition, as future parents and language informants, to analyse linguistic prejudices and snobberies, and to study by means of field work the effectiveness of the language encountered in a variety of contexts.

(b) This however would be only part of the programme. I would see the subject as linking the two supporting studies of mother tongue and foreign language. It would be in this new area of the curriculum that the contrastive features of L1 and L2 were discussed and analysed. The relative economy or redundancy of two different linguistic solutions to a problem would be looked at. The differing semantic fields and the map of the conceptual categories evoked by symbols in L1 and L2 would be examined. One would hope that pupils who had followed the course would both use their mother tongue with more discrimination and effect and be more critical of language used by others.

Obviously this sketch is quite inadequate as a presentation of the

proposed new subject area. Experiments are proceeding in several schools on similar lines to these and encouraging results are reported. Only by a great deal of trial and error will it be possible to arrive at a satisfactory linking, via the new discipline 'language', of L1 and L2 learning which have hitherto in nearly all schools proceeded in completely separate departments, with little mutual feedback. This is surely to waste a great opportunity for interesting interaction.

This seems to me a more acceptable way forward than the vicious circular line of argument which would say to three children in four (as some are suggesting) or to one in two (the present figure) 'You have been found on reaching secondary school to be lacking in some verbal and conceptual abilities. Your deficiencies will inevitably make further progress in many school subjects (including a foreign language) quite difficult and set your teachers problems which before 1964 they by-passed. We have therefore decided to cut out from your programme an important part of the verbal education (the foreign language) that you need more than verbally able pupils.'

A new approach to teaching the foreign language at secondary level

It will not do however to offer to such pupils a study which seems to them irrelevant and which brings no intrinsic rewards of satisfaction or success. This means that a number of changes must be made in language courses for the less able.

(a) Some pupils should be encouraged to follow courses aiming at no more than 'comprehension' of the spoken language. It is to be hoped that teachers will experiment in supporting such courses by use of a simplified phonetic spelling which would by-pass the problems posed by, for example, the orthography of French, and which would be a simplified representation of the spoken language. This proposal, originally made by Henry Sweet, might help the less able pupil to retain and support his learning, especially if he were allowed to use his simplified phonetic spellings in his CSE examination and be allowed a certain latitude in his own phonetic spellings.

(b) A variety of intensive learning techniques would be called for, to help overcome the interference of the mother tongue under traditional timetable arrangements. In particular the less able child should be offered frequent 'remedial' courses at which 'tutors' from colleges and sixth forms give individual tuition. There is now considerable experience of such courses. The York intensive Christmas holiday week in French for the less able fifth former, now in its fourth year, has demonstrated its usefulness and is heavily oversubscribed by pupils wishing to be admitted. In any 'linear' subject even a week's absence from school can cripple progress. Very careful planning and frequent catching up sessions are needed to compensate for interruption of learning.

(c) In language learning older age groups have an important role in helping younger ones (on the model of the infant school vertical

grouping of 5- with 6- and 7-year-olds). Sixth formers and university and college students, the elite who through good fortune succeed in the system, have a duty (which many of them acknowledge) to act as group leaders with the less mature or less able younger age groups. Language work requires above all dialogue. With 30 pupils to a class the possibility of individual dialogue with the teacher is reduced for any given pupil to about 30 seconds in every half hour. Some means must be found to provide dialogue in smaller groups.

The involvement of sixth formers and students is proving to be, in the many experiments that are now going forward, an exciting contribution to solving this problem. (It is also helping to make schools into learning communities, not simply intellectual race tracks.) It is relevant to recall that among the many factors which explain the apparently effortless acquisition of L1 (by children who later have great difficulty over L2) is that in the L1 situation, the single *learner* is surrounded by many teachers (every adult or child within earshot) while in the L2 situation the single *teacher* is surrounded by 30 learners, who get only a fraction of his attention.

(d) A technique which tries to facilitate individual dialogue as a learning technique is the 'reciprocal' course. The method is to bring together equal numbers of native speakers of (say) French and English and match them into pairs which act on alternate days as tutor and pupil. This permits individual one-to-one teaching tailored to the particular needs of each learner. It also (in the experience of those who have experimented with this technique) appears to intensify motivation to learn.

(e) If language learning is to be a preparation for exploration of the foreign country, for going to see 'if it is true', there is a very great responsibility on heads and administrators not to allow the expense and inconvenience of foreign travel to exclude some pupils from poor, or unhelpful, home backgrounds.

To refer again to Dr Burstall's research, she has shown that the effect of combining study visits to France with language learning is to increase motivation and the development of positive attitudes and that this is particularly the case with pupils from secondary modern streams 'who exhibit more hostile attitudes towards foreigners and their culture' and who benefit proportionately more than grammar school pupils from foreign travel properly followed up. Smith has also suggested: 'It is probably more important for less able than for more able pupils that efforts be made to take them abroad'[9]. Yet for obvious reasons the home background makes it unlikely that such

[9] D. G. Smith: 'French and the less able.' *Modern Languages*, vol. LIV, no. 4, September 1973

pupils will be encouraged to travel. It was for this reason that Schools Council Working Paper 28[9], warned of the danger that by the time pupils reach the sixth form modern languages tend to be restricted to middle-class pupils in contrast to the able science pupils from poorer homes whose laboratory is provided by the LEA within the school walls. The danger is a real one unless LEAs make adequate provision of foreign study centres, hostel accommodation for visiting pupils from abroad, generous travel grants etc. It is here that the great leap forward of the seventies must come.

(f) Finally the complex of problems faced by many pupils in the area of the curriculum that we are considering suggests that we should begin to question the appropriateness of a school year in which the school closes its doors for seven weeks in the summer. For children whose backgrounds do not supply 'adult time' for the dialogue required for language acquisition, the closure of the schools is a disaster. This is manifestly true of (say) the Pakistani child in Halifax, who cannot hope to converse, at home or in the street, in anything but his native Punjabi during the seven-week closure, with the inevitable erosion of the learning dearly acquired during the previous term. As in other areas of education the problems of the immigrant child serve to throw light on wider problems affecting other disadvantaged learners. The concept of a 'fourth term' of voluntary schooling in which college and university students and sixth formers return to the classroom in massive numbers working as tutors in small teams under experienced teachers, offering individual dialogue on intensive 'catching up courses' of great variety, has been proposed as a contribution to meeting the learning needs of the pupils whom Newsom called 'Half our future'.

[9] *New patterns in sixth form modern language studies.* Evans, Methuen Educational, 1970.

6

Clare Burstall

Attitudes towards foreign language learning in early adolescence

Since 1964, the National Foundation for Educational Research has been carrying out an evaluation of the teaching of French in selected primary schools in England and Wales. This evaluation has taken the form of a longitudinal study of three age groups of pupils, taught French from the age of eight onwards. Each of the experimental groups originally contained approximately 6,000 pupils, selected on the basis of age alone. This means, of course, that the experimental sample was drawn from all the socio-economic strata normally represented within the state educational system and, in consequence, was characterised by a wide range of ability. At the time of writing, the majority of the pupils in the first experimental group will have left school, those in the second group have recently completed their fifth year in secondary school and those in the third group their second year in secondary school. The pupils in the first and third groups have been under study for a period of five years : three in primary school and two years in secondary school. Those in the second group have been under study for a longer period : three years in primary school and five years in secondary school. Throughout the course of the study, the major part of the fieldwork has been concerned with the collection of data relating to the experimental pupils' level of achievement in French and the development of their attitudes towards learning the language. A considerable amount of data analysis still remains to be carried out, but the fieldwork of the study is now complete and some of the early findings have already been published (Burstall, 1968, 1970a, 1970b). The present account will refer, in the main, to data collected during the middle years of the secondary stage of the evaluation. It is hoped that the findings of the study, although incomplete as yet, will allow some further light to be shed on the factors influencing pupils' attitudes towards foreign language learning during early adolescence.

It has been argued that the successful acquisition of a foreign language is to a large extent determined by attitudinal factors. Lambert and his associates, for instance, have on a number of occasions advanced the view that the key to success in foreign language learning lies in the adoption of an 'integrative' orientation towards the foreign culture, as characterised by the

student's willingness to share certain of the attributes of members of the other 'linguistic community' and to regard himself as a potential member of that community. According to this view, foreign language learning is less likely to meet with success if the student's underlying motivation is 'instrumental' rather than 'integrative' — if, that is, he places a utilitarian value on the achievement of proficiency in the foreign language, without desiring active contact with the speakers of that language nor further knowledge of their culture (Gardner and Lambert, 1959; Lambert et al., 1961; Gardner, 1966; Gardner and Lambert, 1972). The findings of the present study lend only partial support to this view in that, although pupils' attitudes and achievement proved to be closely associated, the motivational characteristics of individual pupils appeared to be neither exclusively 'integrative' nor wholly 'instrumental'. On the one hand, the majority of the pupils taking part in the experiment, whether they liked learning French or not, tended to share an 'integrative' motivation, evincing a strong desire for contact with French people and agreeing that they were primarily learning French in order to be able to communicate with other speakers of the language. On the other hand, there was also ample evidence of 'instrumental' motivation in the emphasis placed by the experimental pupils on the 'pay-off' value of learning French, in terms of enhanced employment opportunities. In a more recent study, Gardner and Santos (1970) have suggested that an 'integrative' orientation may not inevitably lead to superior achievement in foreign language learning, if the cultural context is one in which the acquisition of the foreign language has obvious practical value. Reporting their study of foreign language learning in the Philippines, Gardner and Santos concluded: 'In this cultural context where the second language has unequivocal instrumental value, students who are instrumentally oriented and who receive support from their parents for this orientation are more successful in acquiring the second language than students not evidencing this supported type of orientation.' These findings are consistent with those of the present study, where there was evidence of an association between parents' support for foreign language learning and their evaluation of its relevance to their children's employment prospects.

It was notable, for example, that, throughout the period of the experiment, the attitudes of the girls towards foreign language learning were consistently more favourable than those of the boys. For instance, significantly more girls than boys agreed that they would like to speak many languages, go to France and meet French people, and continue studying French in future years. Significantly more girls than boys also thought that all children should start to learn French in the primary school and that French would be useful to them in their future life. In addition, the girls were more confident than the boys of their parents' support and encouragement. The boys' attitudes towards foreign language learning tended to be comparatively unfavourable. Significantly more boys than girls felt that learning French was a waste of time and that there were more important subjects on which they should be concentrating their effort. Unlike the girls, the boys did not believe that a knowledge of French would be useful to them after they had left school. Evidence from other studies suggests that the more positive attitudes expressed by the girls represent, in the

main, a response to social and cultural pressures. Robinson (1971) has suggested that being 'good at language' may be seen as admirable for girls, but unmanly for boys. The view that foreign language learning is a more suitable accomplishment for girls than for boys is undoubtedly still current in our society, reinforced by the fact that a knowledge of foreign languages has a direct and obvious application to the future employment possibilities open to girls, but is less clearly relevant to those available to boys. Adolescent pupils of both sexes have been reported to view the enhancement of vocational success as the primary function of education and, in consequence, to place a high value on school subjects, such as mathematics and English, which have an obvious relevance to their future employment prospects. Girls and their parents are also reported to accept the vocational value of foreign language learning, whereas boys and their parents are reported not to do so (Schools Council, 1968; Sumner and Warburton, 1972).

It was certainly the case in the present study that parental attitudes towards foreign language learning differed according to the sex of the pupil: girls received more overt parental encouragement to reach a high level of achievement in French than boys did and also benefited from considerably greater practical support in their language learning activities. Other available evidence indicates the existence of a positive association between the attitudes of parents and the attitudes and achievement of their children, both in the general sphere of school attainment (Floud et al., 1956; Fraser, 1959; Douglas et al., 1968) and in the more specific area of foreign language learning (Feenstra and Gardner, 1968; Feenstra, 1969; Gardner and Santos, 1970; Gardner and Lambert, 1972).

Where achievement in a particular subject area, such as mathematics or French, can be shown to vary systematically with the sex of the learner, it seems highly probable that parents are transmitting to their children the accepted values of the wider society. Some support for this view may be found in Morris's (1966) evidence that differences in boys' and girls' reading skills were attributable to motivational and environmental factors rather than to differences in ability, and in Preston's (1962) findings, arising from a comparative study of reading comprehension in the United States and in Germany, that, although girls reached a higher level of achievement than boys in the United States, the reverse was true in Germany. Preston ascribed these results to the fact that 'reading and learning' are regarded as approved masculine activities in Germany, where the teaching force, even at the elementary school level, is predominantly male, whereas in the United States reading skills tend to be 'associated with femininity'. Other cross-national studies (Husén, 1967; Gardner and Lambert, 1972) offer further evidence of the powerful influence that a societal view of this kind can have on pupils' attitudes and achievement.

There is also considerable evidence to suggest that parental encouragement varies with social class, parents in the higher socio-economic strata offering their children more support during their schooling than those in the lower socio-economic strata (Floud et al., 1956; Douglas, 1964; Central Advisory Council for Education, 1967; Barker-Lunn, 1970; Sumner and Warburton,

1972). Furthermore, teachers tend to adopt different standards to evaluate the potential abilities of children from different socio-economic strata, overestimating the abilities of those from higher socio-economic strata and underestimating the abilities of those from lower socio-economic strata, attributing, in addition, less favourable behavioural characteristics to the latter (Goodacre, 1968; Barker-Lunn, 1970). The depressant effect that a child's perception of low expectations on the part of 'significant others' in his life (in this context, parents and teachers) can have on his attitudes, aspirations and achievement has already been demonstrated in a number of studies (Brookover et al., 1964; Johannesson, 1967) and is further supported by the findings of the present study, where there was a clear tendency for pupils from the lower socio-economic strata to adopt less favourable attitudes towards foreign language learning than those expressed by the remainder of the experimental sample.

During the course of the experiment, a growing tendency for the percentage of pupils with favourable attitudes towards foreign language learning to increase with social status became apparent, clearly illustrated by significant differences in the attitudes held by pupils attending the different types of secondary school involved in the experiment. The different types of school varied markedly in the social composition of their intake: at one extreme, the grammar schools drew their pupils mainly from the higher socio-economic strata; at the other, the secondary modern schools drew their pupils mainly from the lower socio-economic strata; the comprehensive schools tended to occupy an intermediate position, with little representation of the extremes of the socio-economic continuum. These differences in the social composition of the school population were paralleled by differences in the pupils' attitudes towards foreign language learning: whatever the specific point at issue, favourable attitudes towards foreign language learning were most characteristic of the grammar school pupils and unfavourable attitudes of the secondary modern school pupils. For example, a significantly higher percentage of pupils in grammar schools than in comprehensive or secondary modern schools agreed that they would like to be able to speak several languages, that they would like to go to France and meet French people, that they would like to continue learning French in the future, that French would be useful to them after they had left school, that their parents were pleased that they were learning French, and that all children should begin their study of French in the primary school. Conversely, a significantly higher percentage of pupils in secondary modern schools than in grammar or comprehensive schools indicated that they were not interested in learning foreign languages, that it was a waste of time to learn French, that they were unlikely ever to speak French once they had left school, that they found French harder to learn than other subjects and felt that they should be spending the time available to them on more important areas of the curriculum. The responses of the comprehensive school pupils consistently indicated a more favourable attitude towards foreign language learning than that of the secondary modern school pupils, but a less favourable attitude than that of the grammar school pupils.

Jahoda (1953) has described the boys attending secondary modern

schools as showing less evidence of upward social mobility than the girls and as having a deeper sense of working-class loyalty. It might therefore have been expected, both from studies of the development of prejudice (Morse and Allport, 1952; Allport, 1954) and from evidence regarding the effect of social class on children's attitudes towards foreign peoples (Lambert and Klineberg, 1967), that the boys in the secondary modern schools would exhibit more hostile attitudes towards foreigners and their culture — in this instance, towards France and the French — than would any other group of pupils in the experimental sample. The data confirmed this expectation.

The findings of a recent cross-national study of children's attitudes towards foreign peoples suggest that favourable attitudes reach their peak at about the age of ten and thereafter decline during the early years of adolescence, concomitant with the accelerated development of the stereotyping process and an increase in loyalty towards the peer-group (Lambert and Klineberg, 1967). Other studies (Morse and Allport, 1952; Allport, 1954) have indicated that close identification with the values of the peer-group, at its height during early adolescence, is a crucial factor in the formation of prejudice and the consequent rejection of values characteristic of foreign cultures. Further, evidence from studies of school achievement strengthens the view that the early adolescent period may be particularly critical for the development of negative attitudes towards the self as well as towards others. A number of studies (Douglas et al., 1968; Schools Council, 1968; Sumner and Warburton, 1972) have highlighted the increasing negativity of the attitudes of unsuccessful secondary school pupils, but Ferri's recent follow-up study of pupils involved in an investigation into the effects of 'streaming' procedures would suggest that even high-achieving pupils, and particularly girls, may show a deterioration in their attitudes to school work and a decrease in their levels of aspiration during early adolescence (Ferri, 1971).

In the present study, pupils' attitudes were investigated at the end of the primary stage of the experiment and again towards the end of the second year of the secondary stage. A somewhat higher proportion of the older pupils expressed generally favourable attitudes towards learning French than did the younger, but there were a number of specific issues on which a negative shift of opinion was apparent during the early adolescent period. For example, significantly more secondary school pupils than primary school pupils agreed that learning French was a waste of time, that they were unlikely ever to speak French once they had left school, that they had difficulty in understanding the tape-recorded material, that they were afraid to speak in French and felt that French was becoming increasingly difficult for them to learn. In the same vein, significantly more primary school pupils than secondary school pupils agreed that they would like to be able to speak several languages and that they would like to go to France and get to know some French people. Similarly, significantly more primary than secondary school pupils felt that their parents were pleased that they were learning French and were themselves eager to continue their study of French. The somewhat higher percentage of pupils claiming to enjoy learning French at the secondary stage than at the primary stage of the

experiment was, in fact, due almost entirely to the high-achieving pupils in the sample, particularly the girls, who welcomed the increasing emphasis on written work encountered in the secondary school. This concentration on written work was linked with a sharp increase in anxiety regarding the necessity to speak in French, the most anxious group in this respect being the high-achieving girls. For this latter group, fear of speaking in French seemed invariably to stem from fear of being exposed to the ridicule of the peer-group; this was far more marked in co-educational than in single-sex schools. This finding may be compared with Ferri's report that, during early adolescence, the high-achieving pupils in her sample, and particularly the girls, developed a poorer self-image and gave greater evidence of anxiety with regard to school achievement than did any other group of pupils (Ferri, 1971).

It has been argued that children will develop positive attitudes towards foreign peoples and their culture simply as a result of receiving foreign language instruction. Riestra and Johnson (1964), for example, investigated the attitudes of fifth-grades towards Spanish-speaking peoples and found that the attitudes of the experimental group, who had studied Spanish, were significantly more positive than those of the control group, who had no knowledge of Spanish. The authors interpreted their findings as evidence that the teaching of a foreign language 'is a potent force in creating more positive attitudes towards the peoples represented by that language'. The findings of the present study would suggest, however, that the mere process of foreign language learning is not in itself sufficient to promote positive attitudes towards the foreign culture, although actual contact with the representatives of that culture may be an important factor both in the development of positive attitudes and in the achievement of linguistic proficiency. It was found in the present study, for instance, that pupils who had been to France during early adolescence differed significantly in attitude and achievement from those who had not had this opportunity : those who had been to France expressed more positive attitudes towards France and the French, as well as towards learning French, than did those who had not been to France; the former also reached a significantly higher level of achievement in both spoken and written French than did the latter. Carroll (1967), in his survey of the foreign language attainments of American college and university students, also found that students who had been abroad achieved a higher degree of proficiency in foreign language skills than did those who had not : the longer the period abroad, the more marked the differences in achievement.

It must be noted, however, that the interpretation of the findings of the present study demands a certain degree of caution, since those pupils who had been to France proved to be disproportionately representative of the higher-status socio-economic groups. It seems probable, therefore, that the enhanced achievement and more positive attitudes of these pupils derived, at least in part, from their more favoured socio-economic status. It is, however, interesting to note that one of the areas in which the two groups of pupils differed most significantly was in their attitudes towards spoken French. Substantially more of the pupils who had been to France than of those who had not been to France

expressed a preference for the spoken aspects of learning French and indicated they would like to be able to speak several languages. Those who had not been to France tended to express a great deal of anxiety about speaking in French, to complain that they were unable to understand spoken French in class, and to indicate that they would prefer to limit their studies to the acquisition of a reading knowledge of the language. Taylor and her associates (Taylor et al., 1971) investigated the factors involved in acquiring spoken fluency in a foreign language (in this instance, Japanese) and concluded that 'empathic capacity' accounted for more than half the variance in performance. 'Empathic capacity' was held to include the ability to understand other people's feelings, to appreciate the details of their behaviour and to respond appropriately. It is possible that this is a capacity which develops more rapidly when pupils are brought into direct contact with a foreign culture than when they are attempting to learn a foreign language in monocultural setting.

The findings of the present study undoubtedly lend support to the view that pupils' attitudes towards learning a foreign language are positively and significantly related to their eventual level of achievement in that language. Throughout the period of the experiment, pupils' attitudes towards learning French and their level of proficiency in the language were in close association : on each of the French tests, whether measuring spoken or written skills, mean scores for pupils with favourable attitudes towards learning French were significantly higher than those for pupils with unfavourable attitudes. This finding applied equally to pupils of both sexes and is consistent with the available experimental evidence. Findings of a similar nature were reported by Jordan (1941), by Pimsleur and his associates (1962), by von Wittich (1962), by Lambert and his associates (1963) and, more recently, by Carroll (1967) and by Gardner and his associates (Feenstra and Gardner, 1968; Gardner and Santos, 1970). However, although such findings indicate the existence of a positive association between pupils' attitudes and achievement in foreign language learning and suggest a complex interaction process, they shed no light on the possible direction of causality. Gardner and Lambert (1972) argue that the major causative variable influencing foreign language acquisition is the attitude of the learner towards the foreign culture, on the grounds that this attitude represents 'a more stable personal characteristic' than any previous experience of achievement. The findings of the present study, although tentative as yet, point in the opposite direction. Pupils' achievement in French during the primary stage of the experiment was found to be a better predictor of attitudes and achievement during early adolescence than were pre-adolescent attitudes towards learning French. This would suggest that the acquisition of foreign language skills and the development of attitudes towards foreign language learning during adolescence may be powerfully influenced by the pupil's previous experience of success or failure in the language learning situation.

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7

Ian J Forsyth

Patterns in the discourse of teachers and pupils

Introductory[1]

There are a number of reasons why the study of classroom discourse might be undertaken. For those whose primary interest is in the nature and quality of education, however, the main reason for such studies is that the actual process of imparting and receiving an education is inextricably bound up with the day-to-day communications of teachers and pupils. It requires only a moment's reflection to realise that we need to give just as much weight to communication in the classroom as we have traditionally conceded to such matters as educational theory, content and organisation of the curriculum, teaching methods, and so on. However much attention we pay to these, their effectiveness depends ultimately on the successful interaction of teachers and pupils.

The aim of this paper is to provide a basis for the study of the everyday uses to which teachers and pupils put the English language and to suggest how the kinds of insights thus gained may be extended and turned to some practical account by teachers and teacher trainers.

Classroom interaction as data

Since at least 1940, educational researchers have used classroom interaction as data for studies whose focus has ranged from measures of the 'emotional climate' of the classroom to attempts to examine the intellectual or cognitive quality of the discourse. The analyses have tended to use either an arbitrary time unit, in which case a researcher may code the ongoing interaction at three-minute intervals, using such categories as 'teacher praise', or they have

[1] The work to which I shall refer in this paper is the result of research undertaken in collaboration with Professor John Sinclair, Dr Malcolm Coulthard and Miss Margaret Ashby. The research was financed by a grant from the Social Science Research Council under the title 'The English used by teachers and pupils', and was based in the English department of the University of Birmingham from 1970 to 1972.

been based on pedagogical units that derive from the general activity of the class, such as 'taking the register', 'correcting homework', 'distributing materials', and so on. As other reviewers have pointed out (e.g. Biddle[1]), they do not take sufficient account of the language itself. An important exception to this general pattern is the work of Bellack and his colleagues[2] who proposed two units for handling classroom discourse: MOVE and TEACHING CYCLE; moreover, their method gave priority to the transcription and coding of texts before proceeding to the subsequent steps in their analysis, thus suggesting (a) that the spontaneous discourse of teachers and pupils is organised, and (b) that this needs to be accounted for first. The two concepts, which derive from Wittgenstein's speculations on 'language games', provide a most useful starting point for the consideration of classroom interaction.

Grammar and discourse

A major difficulty in accounting for the value of a sentence in discourse arises from the complex relationship between the grammatical form of a sentence and its use or meaning in a spoken text. This is most readily illustrated by the way in which a variety of sentence patterns may be used by teachers in order to regulate the actions and behaviour of pupils*.

Examples: I want you to watch what happens when I lift this.
And you can go and sit down.
Can you finish that off?
Shall we do them together?
Let me see if you can sort out which is which.
Let me take that away now.

To the above examples we could also add such subordinate clauses as 'If you turn over the page' and moodless items as 'Quiet', and so on; however, the essential point is that teachers use a number of syntactic forms in order to realise the general function of commands; furthermore, the use of interrogatives and declaratives is far more common than imperatives. Thus, although we may tend to equate grammatical categories such as declarative, interrogative, and imperative with a corresponding set of functions (statement, question, and command), such a clear one-to-one relationship is far from the reality of language in use, even in such a relatively structured setting as a classroom. This lack of fit between sentence pattern and discourse function is most concisely illustrated by a very brief episode in which a teacher is trying to stop one child from pre-

* All the examples are taken from actual texts. The punctuation and spellings have been regularised. Non-verbal actions are printed in italics. A failure to respond is shown by the symbol ø, emphatic stress by using italics for the syllable.

[1] Biddle, B. J., 'Methods and concepts in classroom research'. *Review of Educational Research*, 37, no. 3, 1967, pp. 353-57

[2] Bellack, A. A., and others, *The language of the classroom*. Teachers College Press, New York, 1968

venting another from getting on with his work. He begins by calling on the pupil by name:

TEACHER	PUPIL
D ——— P ———	
	ø
The next time will be very unlucky.	
	ø
Will you stop that please?	
	ø
Lifts pupil out of his seat.	
Now stop it.	

Besides illustrating the previous point, such an example also suggests that there is a process of selection from the types of sentence available to the speaker which is ordered in some way. What is clearly noticeable is that the teacher's language becomes increasingly explicit, and it would be interesting to see similar examples of this kind in order to determine whether or not such a sequence is random. While this discussion is concerned with the use teachers and pupils make of language, it is perhaps worth mentioning that what can be said of the commands which are used in the classroom may also be relevant to other types of discourse.

Myrna Loy: Can you reach the water darling?
William Powell picks up carafe and offers it.
Myrna Loy: No darling; I don't *want* the water.
I just wanted to know if you could reach it.
(from 'After the Thin Man', 1937)

It should be possible to specify the conditions under which different grammatical patterns can serve a variety of functions in the way that Labov[1] has done; that is, interpreting the message of a sentence according to the feasibility of the action referred to and the respective rights and duties of the speakers; however, this would at best lead to a more comprehensive account of the language in abstract terms without bringing us any closer to an understanding of what native speakers are doing when they jointly produce a coherent text. So far, linguistic studies of texts (e.g. Harris[2]) have been concerned with the relationship between sentences, and while rigorous techniques have been developed for handling the ways in which successive sentences are related to one another (Hasan[3]), there remains the matter of accounting for the ability of native speakers to produce coherent texts spontaneously, what Hymes[4] has referred to as their 'communicative competence'.

[1] Labov, W., 'The study of language in its social context', *Studium Generale*, 23, 1970, pp. 30-87.
[2] Harris, Z., 'Discourse analysis', *Language*, 28, 1952, pp. 1-30.
Harris, Z., 'Discourse analysis: a sample text', *Language*, 28, 1952, pp. 474-494.
[3] Hasan, R., *Grammatical cohesion in spoken and written English*, Longman, 1968. (Schools Council Programme in Linguistics and English Teaching, Paper 7.)
[4] Hymes, D., *On communicative competence*, University of Pennsylvania, 1972. Mimeographed.

Just as we are able to produce and understand sentences we have never heard before, so we are also able to assign systematically different meanings to the same sentence or the same item from the lexicon of our language. We are aware, for example, of a number of possible meanings for an item like 'yes', and the most frequently cited means by which systematic change of meaning is effected is by varying a feature of the intonation, say, from a falling to a rising pitch contour. Other equally systematic changes of meaning are possible. Consider the following three examples in which 'yes' was consistently said with the same falling intonation :

TEACHER	PUPIL
(1) Do you recognise this?	
	Yes.*
(2) Touch a piece of metal.	
	Touches radiator
Yes.	
(3) Who can tell me what that is?	
	Hands raised
Yes.	
	Pliers.
Pliers. Yes.	

**Note* : moodless items which have primary stress, operate a complete tone group and are marked by terminal juncture, are punctuated with a full stop.

Here we have four instances of 'yes' in which the phonological shape is constant, but which vary in meaning. One way of accounting for these differences is to consider the item according to the place it takes in the sequence of elements in the discourse. Thus in (1) it is an answering move by a pupil; in (2) it is part of a follow-up move by the teacher; and in (3) the first instance is part of an initiating move which nominates a speaker, and the second is another instance of 'yes' as part of a follow-up move by the teacher.

The analysis of classroom discourse

The production of well-ordered spoken texts is a regular feature of classroom language. Although it is by no means the whole story, nevertheless it does happen, and while the majority of teachers would never think in such terms when considering their work, they are well aware of the absence of this aspect of classroom life which they otherwise usually take for granted. This is to be expected. The pressures which confront the average class teacher — coping with upwards of forty children, trying to achieve a reasonable balance between the children's needs as individuals and the ways they are expected to function as a social group, organising and getting through a syllabus, and so on — make it most unlikely that he can consider how he copes with these and other problems, much less reflect on the role of language in all

this. The following extract may give some idea of how the organisation of classroom discourse is fundamental to the lesson that is in progress.

TEACHER	PUPILS
Now then.	
You said this bottle was empty.	
I say this bottle is full.	
If it was empty then this water would flow in.	
If it's full, we can't get anything else in, can we?	
Something's got to come out.	
Now just think for a minute.	
I say it's full.	
What do you think it's full of?	*Hands raised*
Points to first pupil.	
	1. Air. } *together* 2. Water. }
Points to first pupil again.	
	1. Air.
Again.	
	Air.
Good boy.	
Yes, it's full of air.	
So this bottle wasn't empty, was it?	
	No. (*whole class*)
No.	
It was full of . . .	
	Air. (*whole class*)
What's this room full of?	
(*points to pupil*)	
	Air.
Yes.	
We are like little animals in a big tank of air,	
and we are living in a room full of air.	
Right. Now then.	
I'm going to take the water out of this bottle, and	
I'm going to take the cork out.	

Whatever we say of such an extract, it is certainly more than a bundle of speech acts. Among the observations that might be made are the following:

(1) the text has a unity of subject matter;

(2) it has a beginning and an end, and these are signalled by the occurrence of the items 'Now then' and a repetition of 'Now then'. These have the effect of marking off a sequence of some kind;

(3) the extract falls into distinct parts. These are opened by teacher 'questions': 'What do you think it's full of?'

'Again.'
'It was full of . . .' and
'What's this room full of ?';

(4) the above four examples have the common aim of inviting a verbal response from the pupils. Although two are interrogative, they do not have the rising intonation contour associated with questions;

(5) pupil contributions are elicited by the teacher, and are reciprocal to his elicitations except in one instance;

(6) two things may be said of the second pupil's answer 'Water': it was not elicited by the teacher, neither was it the answer he was anticipating;

(7) two possible interpretations are offered for the subsequent repetition of the first pupil's answer: it is the correct answer and it is in conformity with the model of discourse being proposed by the teacher, both of which are of equal importance;

(8) apart from the second pupil's inappropriate and incorrect answer, the other contributions from the pupils are followed by an evaluative comment which indicates to the pupils how well they are performing. This takes the form of praise 'Good boy', or acceptance signalled by one affirmative 'Yes' and 'No', by repetition of the answer 'Air', or by conflation of the two 'Yes, it's full of air'.

It may seem odd to propose that a teacher can insist on the adoption of a model of discourse when he is not even aware of the existence of it as such; nevertheless 'speaking out of turn' or offering an unelicited contribution is usually frowned on or even ignored, as in the following example, when the pupil's contribution is both relevant and correct. In this extract one pupil perceives what the lesson is all about in the very early stages, but this is not taken up by the teacher:

TEACHER	PUPILS
Now then. I want you to take your pen, and I want you to rub it as hard as you can on something woollen, if you've got something woollen. Just rub it.	
	Rub pens on jerseys etc.
There. And then — you're using a lot of energy aren't you? — and then take your bit of paper and tear it into tiny little bits.	
	Tear paper.
Little bits smaller than that. Put them on the desk, and then just put the end of the pen that you've rubbed near the paper.	*Put pieces of paper on desks.*

and see what happens.

Attract paper with magnetised pen.

Static electricity.

In spite of this observation and a number of very excited bids from five or six other members of the class, the teacher's concern is elsewhere.

Not in your hair.
On your jumper.
And see what happens.

There follows a further series of bids from other children who have completed the task, but the teacher repeats his previous instruction to the slower members of the class :

Tiny bits please.
Much smaller than that.
Now. Put it near your tissue paper.
Tell me what happens when you put your pen near your tissue paper.
(Looking at pupil)

Sir the pen er picks it up.

Yes.
Would you say the pen is doing some work?

Yes, sir. *(whole class)*

Yes.
Would you say the pen was using something?

Yes, sir, Energy. *(whole class)*

Yes.
It's using energy.
Yes.
Where did you get the energy from?

From your arm.

From the rubbing.
Yes.

Right.
Put your pens down.

In this extract the right answer has been passed over. It is as though it had never happened, and from the interspersed comments of the observer the reason is plain enough : this teacher has thirty-five pupils to whom he is equally responsible. What is interesting is the way in which he is able to proceed according to the needs of one whole class, as he perceives them, because unelicited contributions from pupils may not have any status, and are thus liable to be legitimately ignored by the teacher, no matter what claims they may otherwise make. This does not mean that this teacher or others consistently ignore whatever pupils say simply because the contribution is uncalled for;

however, such a choice is open to the teacher as a matter of course. No such choice is open to the pupils.

This extract has a number of the features already noted in the observations made on the piece of text which preceded it. Very briefly, there is a sequence of exchanges between the teacher and the pupils; the exchanges are opened by teacher moves that require either a verbal response or an appropriate action from one pupil; the pupil answers or actions are commented on by the teacher; the episode is marked or framed by the items we noted previously. The pattern that emerges suggests that bits of text are combining and recombining in much the same way as the units of a grammar (Halliday[8]); that is, there seem to be opening moves, answering moves, and follow-up moves, and also those moves which mark the boundaries (in both extracts a part of the text that follows the framing moves has been included to further illustrate the change of direction in the discourse). The moves combine so as to form exchanges, and these in turn are marked off by boundary moves, thus suggesting a higher unit to which we have given the label 'transaction'. The building-up process from smaller to larger units in a hierarchical relationship is a familiar concept in linguistics. Just as sentences can be seen to consist of a successive building up of increasingly larger constituents or units, so classroom discourse shows a tendency to organise itself in a similar fashion; that is, the text of the lesson consists of an arrangement of units of discourse of increasing size and complexity. If this kind of ordering can be demonstrated it might perhaps help to explain how teachers and pupils can quite spontaneously and over several hours sustain successful and meaningful interactions.

The units of classroom discourse

In this paper I want to concentrate on presenting and discussing three units for the analysis of classroom discourse: acts, moves, and exchanges, beginning with moves, going on to to acts and finishing with exchanges. A more detailed discussion of these and other units, together with samples of analysed text will be found in Sinclair et al.[9] and in Coulthard[10].

Discourse moves

Five moves characterise discourse of teachers and pupils: *framing*, *focusing*, *opening*, *answering*, and *follow-up*. These combine to form exchanges and have a structure which consists of discourse acts. In general, the moves of the teacher include a compulsory head or nucleus and a number of subordinate elements (this is particularly true of opening and follow-up moves). The moves made by the pupil often consist of no more than a single act which becomes rank-shifted to the level move.

[8] Halliday, M. A. K., 'Categories of the theory of grammar', *Word* 17, 1961, pp. 241-92
[9] Sinclair, J. McH., et al., *The English used by teachers and pupils*. SSRC Report. University of Birmingham, 1972. Mimeographed
[10] Coulthard, R. M., *The analysis of classroom language*. University of Birmingham, 1973. Mimeographed

1. Framing moves

Teachers rarely begin a lesson without indicating that it is about to begin. The most common way of signalling this is with the frames 'Right' and 'Now then'. In this way, pupils are alerted to the fact that a start of some kind is about to be made. These same items can have different values in classroom discourse (for example, 'right' following a pupil answer will be part of a follow-up move); however, they are recognisably frames when they have a falling intonation contour (primary stress) when they operate a complete tone group and are thus distinct from any preceding or succeeding text. An optional feature is occurrence of silent stress which may follow them. They are used by teachers to mark boundaries that appear to be consistent with stages in the development of a text. They often precede a focusing move or a directive which implies a change of activity. Those identified so far are 'right', 'now then', 'okay', 'now', 'well then', and 'well'.

2. Focusing moves

The special feature of focusing moves is that they comment on the text rather than extend it. Like frames they are used exclusively by the teacher and serve either to outline what is to be talked about or to summarise contents of what has gone before. Their presence suggests that the intervening exchanges may be ordered in some way. It is the occurrence of these together with frames that implies the existence of a unit built up of exchanges (transaction). As with the framing moves, it is the regularity of their occurrence rather than the frequency that matters.

Examples: I'd like to centre some lessons around this whole idea of what is freedom and what is authority, because it's probably more difficult to sort out than you might think.

Okay.
We're up to a point now where we can split up our signs into those we recognise and those we don't.

3. Opening moves

The purpose of opening moves is to initiate an exchange and thus engage another in interaction. A distinction can be made between the opening moves of teachers and those of pupils on two counts: their relative distribution and their relative complexity. Taking the opening moves of the teacher one can distinguish between those whose main purpose is to *elicit* a reply from the pupil, those which *direct* him to an appropriate action, those which *check* his progress or understanding, and those which *inform* in some way. These four types are dealt with in turn.

(i) *teacher elicit*

In a typical opening move which culminates in an elicitation, the teacher frequently incorporates a number of subordinate elements. These may precede and follow the elicitation itself; for example, he may begin

by giving a hint concerning the answer he expects and he is almost certain to select the pupil he wishes to reply. When the selection is not made with the elicitation, there usually follows the sequence : elicitation, pupil bid, nomination of a pupil.

Examples : We haven't got them all in, have we?
What haven't we got?
Points to pupil.

or again,

These letters have special names.
Do you know what it is?
Looks directly at pupil.

Further examples of this kind of move give a clear indication of a teacher's skill in organising pupil contributions.

(ii) *teacher direct*

When the main element of an opening move is a directive, the structure is less elaborate and may do no more than select the addressee. The pupil is required to perform the appropriate action.

Example : Look mister.
Turn around.

In some cases a teacher may support his directive with a supplementary comment which justifies or explains the directive.

Example : Concentrate on getting the slope right.
You're still leaning them every which-way.

(iii) *teacher check*

These are used exclusively by the teacher and serve to check the progress and understanding of his pupils. They may include a nomination.

Example : Finished Carl?

(iv) *teacher inform*

The function of these is to convey information. Like the framing and focusing moves they do not require an active response from the pupil, apart from giving his attention to the teacher. These can include any number of informatives.

Example : It's called cursive writing.

(v) *pupil elicit*

These nearly always include an element whose function is to select the addressee, such as 'Miss', 'Sir', and so on. These may occur before or after the elicitation. Their omission may be a sign of informality or rudeness. They usually include an acknowledgement, either verbal or non-verbal, from the teacher, and in this case a post-head comment.

Example :

PUPIL	TEACHER
Mr ———	
	Yep.
Why can't we do it the old fashioned way?	
With the desks in rows.	

Without the teacher's act of acknowledgement, they may never get off the ground.

(vi) *pupil inform*

These moves serve the same function as the teacher inform moves; however, their structure is quite different from those of the teacher in a way that reflects their relative status. Like the pupil elicit moves, they include a pre- or post-head nomination, followed by an optional comment.

Example : Mr ———
Somebody's taken Jane's book.
She had it on the table when she went out.

4. Answering moves

(i) *pupil reply*

These stand in reciprocal relation to the teacher opening moves. They are realised by the following acts : *acknowledge* (when the head of the opening move is an informative), *reply* (when the head of the opening move is an elicitation), and *react* (when the head of the opening move is a directive). They are generally very simple in structure, and are frequently tied syntactically to the teacher's elicitation (e.g. Teacher : It's a ... Pupil : Book. Teacher : Yes. Good boy. It's a book.). Answering moves may include an optional comment; however, for the most part pupils seem reluctant to go beyond what might be regarded as minimally adequate replies. They are not encouraged when any comment or other expansion is cut short by the teacher's follow-up move. The following example is taken from a lesson in which a teacher was deliberately holding back in or to get the maximum response.

Example : She wants his money to give him sort of like before, but
he wants the money to belong to him to give to her.
Pause
If you know what I mean.

(ii) *pupil react*

These usually consist of no more than the appropriate action being carried out. They may, however, include an optional acknowledgement by the pupil, which will precede or accompany the action.

Example :

TEACHER	PUPIL
Try this first.	
	Okay. *Writes*

A feature of such an example is that the acknowledgement 'Okay' is subordinate to the action of writing. That we know this intuitively to be true may be confirmed by asking ourselves what would happen if the same comment were to occur without the appropriate action being taken.

5. Follow-up moves

Follow-up moves are an essential feature of some kinds of classroom discourse. They follow a pupil's answering move and serve to indicate the teacher's assessment of its worth. An informal test of the reality of the language functions being proposed here can be made by putting oneself in a teaching relationship with another or group of others and then making a conscious effort to withhold the feedback this move provides. Follow-up moves are confined to the teacher, and as the sole provider of this kind of explicit information on performance, the teacher has a powerful rhetorical tool. Of course, pupils may provide the teacher with information on how well he is performing, but this is rarely if ever made explicit. The structure of follow-up moves is realised by three elements : accept, evaluate, and comment.

Example : Yes.
Very good answer.
Two team points to you.

The 'evaluate' element is obligatory. Some idea of the compulsory nature of 'evaluate' is conveyed by the way in which pupils who are denied it quickly become confused and silent. This at least is their initial reaction. It is as though they interpret its absence as a sign of the teacher's lack of interest in what they have said, or possibly a reluctance on his part to give a negative evaluation of their performance. This suggests that they are using their intuitive knowledge of the structure of discourse in order to make sense of such an event.

Discourse acts

The typical realisation of a discourse act is a free clause, together with any subordinate elements. The exceptions to this are generally members of a closed class of items (for example, the markers that realise framing moves), and are marked by stress, pitch and juncture as distinct. For convenience sake the acts are presented in the form of a table. In many cases they may be realised by a non-verbal signal; for example, those noted so far are prompt, clue, cue, bid, nomination, acknowledge, and accept. Apart from comment and loop they are all of the subordinate elements in move structure. (See table pp. 89, 90.)

TYPE OF ACT	TYPICAL REALISATION	FUNCTION	EXAMPLES
marker	a small set of moodless items, with falling intonation [1] or [1 +]	to mark boundaries in the discourse	*Right.* *Now then.*
starter	statement, question, or command	to encourage the expected response	*But is it ordinary writing?* *how would you describe it?*
elicitation	question	to obtain a verbal response	*Now what do you mean?*
check	polar question with rising intonation [2]	to establish that pupils understand, are making satisfactory progress, etc.	*Alright?* *Finished?*
prompt	imperatives and moodless items	to encourage a response	*Have a go.* *Go on.*
clue	statement, question, command or moodless item	to help pupil by expanding or clarifying an elicitation or directive	*You told me before.* *Look at the car.*
cue	a small set of imperative or moodless commands	to ensure an appropriate pupil contribution	*Don't call out.* *One at a time.*
directive	commands	to obtain a non-verbal response	*Touch a piece of metal.*
bid	a small set of moodless items	to signal a desire to speak	*Sir.*
nomination	names, pronouns of address with primary stress	to nominate a speaker	*Annette.* *You tell us.*
informative	statement	to provide information without requiring more than the attention of the listener	*It's affected.* *It's not natural to him.*
acknowledge	moodless item and / or non-verbal signal	to signal attentiveness, understanding etc.	*Yes.* NODDING

TYPE OF ACT	TYPICAL REALISATION	FUNCTION	EXAMPLES
reply	moodless items statements, some questions	the verbal response to an elicitation	*Energy.*
react	non-verbal action	the non-verbal response to a directive	TOUCHES METAL
accept	a small set of moodless items, repetitions of pupil replies, low fall [1-]	a non-committal indication that the teacher has heard or seen the pupil's reply or react	*Yes.* *Fine.*
evaluate	same moodless items as in *accept* but with a high fall [1^], statements, repetitions of pupils' replies, with high fall (positive) or rising or sharp falling-rising (negative) [2]	to assess and comment on a pupil reply or react	*No.* *You can have a team point.*
comment	statements and tag questions	to expand, justify, or explain, usually following an evaluation	*Yes.* *They drained out all the liquid from the body.*
metastatement	cataphoric statement usually by reference to future	to define what is to be talked about or done	*Today we're going to do three quizzes.*
conclusion	anaphoric statement	to summarise what has been talked about or done	*So those are all certain signs.*
loop	small set of items with rising intonation [2]	to halt the discourse, to draw special attention to a pupil answer	*You what?*

These can be subdivided into boundary exchanges and teaching exchanges. The various acts and moves described so far combine to form twelve different kinds of teaching exchange, ten of which are initiated by the teacher and two by the pupil. Of the ten initiated by the teacher, four are free and six are bound. The exchanges are dealt with in the following order: those initiated by the pupil, free exchanges initiated by the teacher, bound exchanges initiated by the teacher. They are labelled according to the function of the opening move.

1. Pupil initiated exchanges

It follows from what has been said about moves that these occur very rarely; however, it is possible to distinguish two types: pupil elicit and pupil inform.

(i) *Pupil inform*

PUPIL	TEACHER
He's supposed to go to Miss — or Mr — for showing off.	ø

As in this case, they are often ignored by the teacher although the teacher may sometimes respond by praising the pupil or showing polite interest.

PUPIL	TEACHER
We've got one of those Mr —	
	Great.

(ii) *Pupil elicit*

These are rather more common than pupil inform exchanges. They differ from the teacher elicit exchanges in two respects: they are initiated by the pupils; there is no follow-up move.

PUPIL	TEACHER
Mr —	
	Yep.
Is that all on one line?	
	Yes it's on one line.
	The line will depend on how big or how small your handwriting is.

These exchanges have two characteristics: the elicitation is usually a request for unknown information; the reference is nearly always relevant to the subject in hand or to matters of classroom procedure, such as permission to go to the toilet. A possible exception would be the use of a pupil elicit exchange as a diversion, for example, to launch a teacher on a favourite subject.

2. Teacher initiated exchanges (free)

These are of two kinds : boundary and teaching.

(a) *Boundary exchanges*

Reference has already been made to the way in which teachers mark stages in the development of classroom discourse as, for example, at the beginning of a lesson or in changing from one activity to another, or when he wishes to alter the course of a discussion. In order to accomplish this kind of goal, he will introduce a boundary exchange into the text. These consist of two moves : framing and focusing: their function is to indicate a boundary between sequences of exchanges. The pupil is required to attend and nothing more as distinct from the more active role he is expected to occupy in the teaching exchanges.

Example : Right.
Today we're going to look at some pictures.

(b) *Teaching exchanges*

(i) *Teacher elicit*

The teacher exchange which is aimed at eliciting a pupil contribution or move is by far the most common. It has three essential parts or moves : the opening move by the teacher which consists of at least an elicitation together with any optional elements, a reciprocal answering move by the pupil, and a follow-up move by the teacher which provides the pupil with explicit feedback on his performance. Such exchanges typically occur in class discussion led by the teacher. The act of bidding to answer, signalled by raised hands, and the subsequent selection of the speaker by the teacher are regarded as being subordinate elements in the opening move; the justification for this is that the speaker role is not ceded to a pupil until the nomination has been made.

TEACHER	PUPILS
Now what then does this mean?	
It's not only independence that he feels.	
But can you try to elaborate on that.	
	Hands raised
Yes.	
	He wants to belong to a group. He doesn't want to be an individual.
That's interesting.	

(ii) *Teacher direct*

A large part of a teacher's time is given over to the organisation and regulation of pupil actions and behaviour.

TEACHER	PUPIL
Can you do it in the smaller book please?	
	Takes out book

Whereas the follow-up move is an obligatory element in a teacher elicit exchange, it is optional in those exchanges which require a non-verbal response from the pupil; thus the difference in function is underlined by a variation in the structure of the exchange.

(iii) *Teacher check*

The function of these is to check on the progress of the pupils or that they have understood a previous contribution to the lesson.

TEACHER	PUPIL
Finished Joan?	
	Nod
Good girl.	

In this example, the teacher does provide feedback; however, this is optional as in the teacher direct exchanges. One consequence of exchanges in which teacher feedback is an optional element of the exchange is that when such a move is made it has a special force. Unlike obligatory feedback, it has the quality of an extra favour conferred. The teacher check exchange is frequently used as an indirect strategy which can serve to bring a pupil into line, although it may not always be effective and the teacher may have to spell out the message.

TEACHER	PUPIL
Have you finished yours Pete?	
	No
Well just get on with it please.	

(iv) *Teacher inform*

These, surprisingly, occur only occasionally and it seems that information is rarely presented in a direct way. This will probably vary with the individual teacher, educational level, setting, and subject-matter, but in the texts examined so far teacher inform exchanges are quite rare. They are quite distinct in structure in that they consist of a single element: the opening move of the teacher which serves to convey information. The pupils are expected to listen and no more than this.

TEACHER	PUPIL
These symbols were thought to be mysterious patterns which might fend off evil spirits.	

3. Teacher initiated exchanges (bound)

All of the exchange types referred to so far are regarded as free; however, it frequently happens that exchanges may be clearly bound to each other. A bound exchange is identified as being subordinate to a previous elicit or direct exchange.

So far six bound exchanges have been identified. Their special interest is that they relate very closely to individual teaching styles, and give a clear

picture of the kind of linguistic skills on which the class teacher has to draw. For example, when a pupil fails to make an answering move in response to an opening move a number of possibilities are open to the teacher: he can urge the pupil to provide an answer; he can nominate another pupil; or he can provide the pupil first selected with a clue of some kind. If he opts for any of these three alternatives he is reinitiating the original opening move. Consider the difficulties of this teacher and how he copes with them.

(i) *Reinitiation 1*

TEACHER	PUPILS
Well.	
Let's think about a further idea here,	
and all of you think.	
Come on.	
Do you think he puts his case very well?	
	ø
I mean what do you notice about his attitudes to her?	
	ø
Come on.	
	ø
Any ideas?	
	Hands raised
Yes.	
Come on.	

Here the failure to obtain an answer is countered by a clue to the expected answer, and this is followed by two prompts until the pupils start to bid. This all took place in seconds and yet time seemed to hang very awkwardly until the teacher's skill and persistence were finally rewarded.

(ii) *Reinitiation 2*

Another type of reinitiation occurs when the teacher gets the wrong answer. Such a situation is extremely delicate because, while the teacher may be anxious to avoid discouraging the child, he may nevertheless wish to pursue the answer he has anticipated.

TEACHER	PUPILS
What's the person who sells meat?	
	Meat man.
No. Meat man fine	
but you have another word.	
	Butcher.
Butcher.	
That's right.	

This second type of reinitiation shows how difficult it is for a teacher to maintain a proper balance between good interpersonal relations and a regard for the right answer.

(iii) *Listing*

Among the kinds of distinctions that can be made in teacher-pupil discourse is between those in which there is one and only one answer and those where a number of possible answers may be admitted.

TEACHER	PUPILS
Can you suggest the sort of things that might be in with them?	
	Hands raised
Yes.	
	Jewels.
Their own special jewels, the ones they liked best.	
	Their robes.
Clothes, yes.	
	The couch they liked best.
Yes, their favourite throne or couch.	
	Their statue.
Yes, lots of statues have been found.	

In the follow-up moves made by the teacher, the intonation is always on a low rising contour, thus accepting the answer and at the same time giving a clear signal that other answers are acceptable. The same linguistic items with a falling intonation would signal the end of the exchange.

(iv) *Reinforce I*

This happens when a directive from the teacher is understood and ignored. This is a most awkward moment for all but the very skilled teacher. In this example, the teacher insists and finally gets his way.

TEACHER	PUPIL
Can I mind that please?	
	*You can't; you can't.
Can I mind it please?	
	*No, you can't.
Come on.	
	ø
Please	
	Gives toy to teacher
	Here you are.

A verbal response from the pupil is quite inappropriate. Here, apart from exemplifying an exchange type, we can see what happens when an interrogative command is treated by the addressee as a question.

(v) *Reinforce 2*

When a child has misunderstood a directive, the teacher will redirect him by providing some clue to the appropriate action, a prompt or a nomination.

TEACHER	PUPIL
Try to concentrate on all those lower case letters on the bottom.	
	Writes I'm not doing it properly.
On the grey line if you're using those grey books.	
	Writes

(vi) *Repeat*

A teacher may have a number of reasons for holding up the discourse. In this example, a Jamaican teacher has upwards of a hundred children to teach, in a classroom without walls, and with construction work going on in the school area. Not surprisingly, she needs to be sure that all of the children have heard what has been said.

TEACHER	PUPILS
I promised to read you a story about what again?	
	Inaudible reply
What is it?	
	Old Mother Hubbard.
That's right. Old Mother Hubbard.	

These exchange types give us a glimpse of the kinds of rhetorical skills a teacher has to call on in the course of the day. The last six are of particular interest because they can provide insights into the kinds of verbal strategies used by teachers.

Conclusion and discussion

In this paper, I have tried to show how a shared perspective by teachers and pupils is fundamental to the spontaneous production of coherent discourse; that they adopt systematic procedures for talking which enable them to achieve certain goals. Such procedures, furthermore, are of necessity taken for granted.

Because the interaction of teachers and pupils is at the heart of the educational process, and since this involves some kind or kinds of discourse, there is a need for a closer examination of these in terms of structure, aims and content. Until we have more objective ways of accounting for the patterns in the discourse of teachers and pupils we lack the kind of basic knowledge that can make it meaningful to talk about life in classrooms as it is and, therefore, as it might be.

The data on which this work has been based is taken largely from primary schools in the Midlands and in the London area. In addition, it has tended to concentrate on upper juniors, in which the teacher is conducting a formal lesson. This means that it is *one* way of looking at *one* kind of discourse.

One of the most interesting features of the texts studied so far is the way in which classroom language is distributed between teachers and pupils in such a way as to define their relationship. For example, teachers consistently specify long- and short-term goals (metastatements), control and regulate pupil actions and contributions to the discourse (directives, elicitations, checks, cues, and prompts), provide constant and explicit information on the verbal and non-verbal actions of the pupils (accepting, evaluating, and comment), formulate stages in the development of the text (conclusions), give formal indication of these (markers), divert or hold up the main direction of the discourse (loops). In addition, the teachers are largely responsible for the initiation and closure of exchanges (opening and follow-up moves), and of transactions (boundary exchanges). By contrast, the pupils occupy what is generally a passive and subordinate role and are seemingly expected to confine themselves to answering moves. On those occasions when pupils do initiate an exchange, this is nearly always related to a topic or activity that has been defined by the teacher.

The following suggestions are intended to give some idea of some of the ways in which this work might be extended and applied.

1. *A study of teacher-pupil interactions in the reception classes of primary schools*

   This could shed some light on how the rules for speaking are acquired.

2. *A study of pupil to pupil interaction*

   This could have a threefold purpose: (i) to consider what kinds of patterns are generated, (ii) to examine the range of uses to which language is put[*], (iii) to compare the findings with existing information on teacher-pupil discourse.

[*] A most interesting study of the uses to which children put spoken language has been initiated by Miss Janet Ede of Matlock College of Education and Mr Jack Williamson of Retford College of Education. Their work is based on Halliday's proposals for a functional model of language (viz. Halliday, M.A.K., 'Relevant models of language' in A. M. Wilkinson, edit., *The state of language, Educational Review*, 22, no. 1, 1969, pp. 26-37).

3. *The consideration of how the range of functions available to the pupil might be varied*

This could most usefully be undertaken by teachers themselves.[12] There is a special need for caution, however, bearing in mind the general lack of information concerning communication in the classroom. At the moment, there is a tendency to focus on such issues as whether teachers talk too much or whether they should talk at all. We need to recognise that questions relating to the relative amounts of talk will not take us very far; besides, talk for its own sake is no more desirable than an unthinking reverence for silence. We need rather to ask what language is used for.

4. *A study of how exchanges are ordered*

This would do two things: contribute to a more precise definition of transaction, and provide further insights into the techniques and strategies teachers use, say, in developing a discussion; for example, a teacher may often succeed in getting a pupil who is shy or otherwise reluctant to make a contribution by employing a sequence of one or more elicitations which require no more than a simple 'yes' or 'no', and follow these with an elicitation that requires more of the pupil.

Example:

TEACHER	PUPIL
Do other people agree with that?	
	Hands raised
You agree with it, do you?	
	Nods
Why do you agree with it?	
	His accent.

We need to avoid the temptation to compile a list of 'strategies for teachers', however, if only because they may not always work.

Example:

TEACHER	PUPIL
Did you hear what he said?	
	Yes.
Would you agree with it?	
	Yes.
Do you want to add anything to it?	
	No.

[12] In this respect valuable suggestions will be found in: Strevens, P.D., *Papers in language and language teaching*. Oxford University Press, 1965; Wilkinson, A. M., *The foundation of language*. Oxford University Press, 1971; Barnes, D., 'Classroom contexts for language and learning' in A. M. Wilkinson, edit., *The context of language*. *Educational Review*, 23, no. 3, 1971, pp. 235-47.

5. *Teacher training*

Studies of classroom discourse can provide teachers in training with a schematic way of studying some aspects of the ways in which teachers and pupils interact. It does not necessarily enable them to make value judgements on the quality of the interaction, but it certainly can help them to clarify their own beliefs with regard to what constitutes effective teaching. There are good grounds for supposing that we may look forward to a better understanding of the quality of education; however it stands, the following are some of the uses that might be considered:

(i) as a component in language study courses;
(ii) as a framework for tutor-student discussions of teaching practice;
(iii) as a supporting technique in micro-teaching;
(iv) as supporting material in courses for immigrant teachers whose first language is not English.[9]

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[9] The need for some such material and suggestions for its use are discussed in Julian Dakin's *A survey of courses for immigrant teachers*, CILT, 1971 (Reports and Papers 5).

8

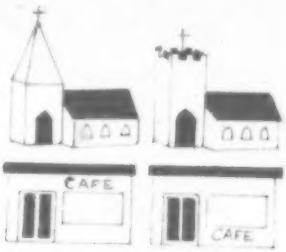
James Wight

The space between

As I understand them, the preceding papers examine English teaching and modern language teaching to see whether the divide which traditionally exists between these two educational activities is inevitable; or whether there are areas of common theoretical interest which can be analysed from each side to the mutual benefit of both. This paper is about the teaching of English to West Indian children. For reasons which will be considered shortly, there is some ambiguity about whether West Indian children should be regarded as mother-tongue English speakers or not. Because of their rather special linguistic status, it is likely that West Indian children may well pose questions to those who teach them English that will be of interest to both sides.

A suitable place to start is by considering the classroom English of one particular West Indian child. Her name is Jennifer. At the time of recording she was in her first year of the junior school. She had just been shown how to play an enquiry game which required her to find her way on a map by asking her partner, Carole, appropriate questions. At each road junction on the map the questioner has to discover which of two similar buildings is the next point on the route. In the transcription which follows, it is worth comparing Jennifer's performance with that of an 'average' 7½-year-old native English speaker and then with a child for whom English is a foreign language.

Jennifer's questions	*Carole's replies*	*Choice on the map*
Which one shall I go to now?	The church	
Have it got a pointing tower?	No	
Have it got a square tower?	Yes	
Has it got a cross on the top?	Top of what?	
The tower	Yes	
Which one shall I go to now?	The cafe	
Have it got a sign on top of the window?	Yes	
Have it got a green roof . . . door?	Yes	



Jennifer's questions	*Carole's replies*	*Choice on the map*
Which one shall I go to now?	The green house not the red house.	
Have it got . . . 'ave it got two tree . . .two tree between the house?	No	
Have they . . . have they got a lickle tree and a big tree?	No	
Have it got the same tree . . . same size?	Yes	
Have it got a red roof? . . . etc.	Yes	

Although her performance was less confident and proficient than that of most West Indian children of her age, it is of interest because it illustrates in several ways the central theme of this paper, *the space between*.

Discussion about many educational issues is conducted in terms of binary opposites. Thus teachers are authoritarian or permissive, teaching is child centred or teacher centred, structured or unstructured. Children's linguistic abilities are, in a similar way, subjected to polar yes/no questions: 'Can they read?', 'Does she understand this utterance?', 'Does he know the meaning of this word?' Closer observation however often reveals that there is no clear-cut choice between the alternatives, A and B, because the constrasting concepts are comparative rather than absolute. A and B are the opposite ends of a scale and much of the interesting data lies between these extremes.

The intention in this paper is to focus on several different sorts of theoretical middle ground, the space between languages, and dialects, between 'can' and 'can't', and the space between words.

To start with a question raised earlier, what sort of language does Jennifer have as her mother tongue? Is her performance that of a native English speaker or not? There is not much doubt that the language spoken in Jennifer's home is broad Jamaican dialect, referred to by linguists (though not by the Jamaicans who speak it) as Jamaican Creole.

There is a debate about whether the English-based Creoles spoken in the Caribbean should be regarded as varieties of English or not. This debate need not concern us, especially when it is realised that even in Jamaica, 'pure' Creole is something of a theoretical construction. To quote Beryl Bailey: 'A given speaker is likely to shift back and forth from Creole to English or something closely approximating English within a single utterance, without ever being conscious of this shift. Most observers of language in Jamaica have encountered extreme difficulty in distinguishing between the various layers of the language structure, and indeed the lines of demarcation are very hard to draw.'[1] This

[1] Bailey, B. L., *Jamaican Creole syntax*, Cambridge University Press, 1966

means that rather than regarding Jennifer's language as a fixed variety with inflexible rules, it is more useful to regard her as operating over a dialect continuum with Jamaican Creole at one end and standard English at the other. Whatever the arguments about the pure Creole end of the scale, Jennifer's growing ability to move backwards and forwards along most of the continuum makes it essential to regard her as an English dialect speaker — provided it is realised that the dialect she speaks in school is the more standard end of her dialect range.

West Indian Creole speakers are not unique in their ability to range along a dialect continuum, sometimes switching consciously from one variety to another, sometimes unconsciously. The majority of English speakers do this also. What makes Jennifer's position special is the greater linguistic distance between the ends of her dialect scale and the educational consequences of this greater distance.

On entry to the infant school, for example, she was only really familiar with the broad Jamaican dialect spoken at home. At first the teacher and many of Jennifer's classmates were not entirely intelligible to her. Jennifer, as it happens, was one of a small but significant minority of West Indian children who opt for silence in their first months in the infant school — because withdrawal appears the safest strategy.

More significant though for many West Indian children than the teacher's intelligibility is the space between spoken and written English. It would not be controversial to suggest that the greater the distance between a child's spoken English and the written English he has to learn, the longer it will take for that child to achieve literacy. Such a hypothesis gets considerable support from the data about West Indian children's reading ages at the infant/junior transition stage. It is safe to argue that Creole interference in the acquisition of initial literacy is a major factor in the depressed educational performance of many West Indian children.

There are currently several notions about how best to teach non-standard dialect speakers to read and write. These approaches have been developed and discussed in the context of urban education and black children in America. Although the approaches differ, they share a common starting point — that the children's language must be viewed objectively and not as a debased form of 'good' English. The concept of good English itself is a powerful source of confusion. Consider, for example, Jennifer's second question in the transcription above. Is Jennifer's 'Have it got a pointing tower?' good English? One's answer depends on how the word good is to be defined. In this context it can be interpreted in two different ways :

1. Good = effective
2. Good = standard, or socially approved.

It would appear, unfortunately, that the second meaning usually predominates. On a recent in-service course, fifteen teachers were asked to provide

synonyms for 'good' in the expression 'good English'. All the synonyms except one were related to the idea of standard English — many of them incorporating unwarranted value judgements. Thus good (standard) English is variously represented as proper, correct, grammatical, well formed, pure English, with the inevitable implication that non-standard dialects must be improper, incorrect, ungrammatical ill formed, impure or corrupt, or simply bad English. Non-standard dialect speech is also judged careless, slovenly, ugly or just plain wrong.

For a child to have his language judged in this way has powerful psychological consequences. And on the part of the teacher it can lead to a confusion in language teaching objectives, as the two separate meanings of good English get run together. It can also lead to an inaccurate diagnosis of children's learning difficulties and faulty evaluation of their language performance. Thus when Jennifer starts her questions 'Have it got... ?' she is not being careless. She is moving from one grammatical system (Jamaican Creole) to another (standard English) and is operating in the space between the two. Broad Creole speech does not use auxiliary inversion to signal question. In Jennifer's questions the inversion pattern is that of standard English. But the Creoles are uninflected languages, which explains Jennifer's use of the uninflected verb 'have' instead of the standard English inflection 'has'.

Similarly, Jennifer's question 'Have they got a lickle tree and a big tree?' is probably an intermediate utterance between the Jamaican Creole /Wan trii likl an wan trii big?/[2] and the standard 'Is there a little tree and a big tree?' Thus what looks like carelessness is in fact impressive evidence of Jennifer's developing skill at dialect switching.

As mentioned earlier, in determining the appropriate teaching approach for dialect speakers like Jennifer — whether one's concern is with literacy or oracy — the starting point must be an objective exploration of the language resources which the child brings to school. But linguistic objectivity is not in itself enough to determine educational objectives. For educational goals are not scientific truths, they are matters of opinion. Should one, for example, attempt to teach children like Jennifer standard English? A question like that triggers off a chain of other questions which could well be the subject of another full paper.[3]

In our work on the Schools Council Project, 'Teaching English to West Indian Children',[4] we eventually concluded that there was a case for providing

[2] The Creole transcription used here was first used in Cassidy, F. G., *Jamaica talk*, Macmillan, 1961, and subsequently in *Jamaican Creole syntax* and other major reference works.

[3] A discussion of some of these questions is contained in Wight, J., 'Dialect in school'. *Educational Review*, vol. 24, no. 1, November 1971, pp. 47-58.

[4] This project was based at the University of Birmingham; team members were J. Wight, R. A. Norris and F. J. Worsley. Professors J. M. Sinclair and P. H. Taylor were project co-ordinators. *Concept 7-9* is published by E. J. Arnold, 1972.

some systematic help with certain standard *written* forms for those West Indian children who appeared not to be acquiring and using them easily. The Dialect Kit in *Concept 7-9* was the result of this decision. The strategies and activities advocated in this kit are unusual in that they incorporate both foreign language teaching practice and certain important mother-tongue principles. The material is designed to teach a precise and rather short list of standard English grammatical inflections and the techniques are predominantly those of foreign language teaching. But there are two salient differences :

1. Because the children are native English speakers, the oral language examples used to focus on and then practise the target inflections can be much more varied and demanding than would be the case if the children were learning a new language.

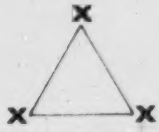
2. The teacher has to introduce and teach the material in such a way as to foster interest in dialect differences and the differences between spoken and written English. The danger, which does not exist in teaching a foreign language, is that the whole exercise may be interpreted as an attack on the way the child and his family speak. This consideration nearly prevented the inclusion of any material of this sort in *Concept 7-9*.

The Dialect Kit contrasts with the 3 main units of teaching material produced by the project in that it is solely concerned with standard English and has no real bearing on the more fundamental issues involved in the analysis of such notions as language proficiency and communication competence.

It is generally accepted that the clinical measurement of children's verbal skill is more difficult than it might at first appear. The tests currently available are often described as superficial or culturally biased. The typical testing situation puts many children on the defensive and often mystifies them with its uncontextualised and unfamiliar language activities. The need for standardised comparable scores forces the test designer to ask the sort of polar questions discussed earlier 'Can the child use this grammatical structure?' 'Does he know that word?' Such questions may be inevitable in standardised tests but they are too blunt when it comes to analysing command of language with a view to deciding appropriate teaching and learning activities in the classroom.

There is, for example, a lot of space between the extremes of knowing a word well and not knowing it at all. This space leaves room for other questions such as : 'How well do you know a word?' 'How available is the word for use?' Consider for example the following transcription which is quoted in the manual of *Concept 7-9,* Unit 3. Brian, an 8-year-old West Indian boy, is describing a picture from his symbol-drawing book for his partner, Aswil, to draw. They have eye-to-eye contact through a small window in the cardboard screen which separates them. Aswil posts his answers back through the window to Brian for checking. In the process Brian can assess the effectiveness of his description and

improve it as necessary. In this instance the task involved is the description of a blue triangle with a red 'X' outside each corner of the triangle :

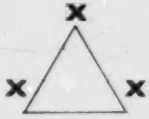


Brian : A triangle the right way up.
Aswil : What colour?
Brian : Re(d) . . . Blue.
Aswil : What else?
Brian : A red cross at the top. A red 'X' at the side . . . near to the side. A red cross at the side is a bit underneath. And the other side is the same.

Aswil hands over his drawing:

Brian : Not wrong, you done them too far up.
Aswil : Not wrong? You have them right when you said they're not wrong.
Brian : You put them right . . . too far up there.
Blue square — a red triangle on the top — a red cross on the top.
Aswil : Blue square?
Brian : Not. A red X then a red X.

Aswil hands over his second drawing:



Brian : Wrong. Done it too far up.
Blue triangle — a red cross on top and two red — a red cross near down, by the — at the bottom — and another red cross on the other side down at the bottom.

Aswil hands over his third drawing:

Brian : They're too far up again.
Blue triangle with a red X on top, and a red X at the bottom by the corner and another red X at the bottom by the other corner.

Aswil hands over his fourth drawing which is correct.

Right.

Watching Brian attempt to solve that communication problem, it was tempting to suggest to him the word 'corner' which he so obviously needed to establish the position of the two troublesome red crosses. His final description, though, demonstrated that the word was there all along as part of his active vocabulary. If in the classroom one operates predominately in terms of children knowing or not knowing vocabulary, the tendency will be to anticipate and provide key words. Sometimes, though, it is better not to do so, but rather to create situations where children need to search their own language resources. This has a double value. It should increase the facility with which children are able to move around and select from their own vocabulary. It will also encourage and develop strategies (which are natural to children from a very early age) that enable them to cope when a key term is not known or at least not immediately available for use.

There is an interesting example of this in the transcription of Jennifer's enquiry (q.v.). She was faced with the task of differentiating verbally between a church with a square tower and a church with a spire. Not knowing the word *spire* she coins the expression 'pointing tower', which as it happens is a metaphor that would have been fully appreciated by medieval church builders!

As mentioned earlier Jennifer is a shy girl — such as might early retreat into silence in a face-to-face language testing situation. In fact, having had the enquiry game in question explained to her, she would not utter a word until she had first been given the chance to play the game with Carole in a quiet corner of the classroom, unobserved by the teacher or anybody else. However, once confident about what was expected, she was happy to be recorded and even quite eager to demonstrate the game to visitors to the classroom.

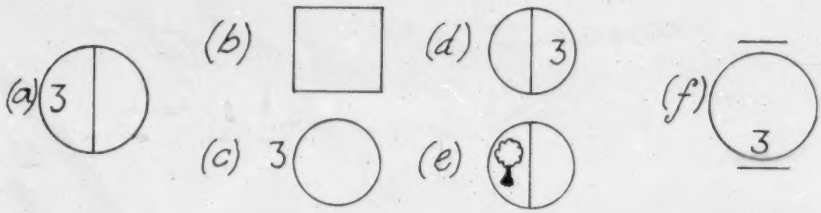
Another component of communication competence is the element of receptive language skill. Here, too, there is some interesting territory between two extremes of full understanding and total incomprehension. Unit 1 of the projects materials, *Listening with understanding*, is concerned with this receptive skill and owes a certain amount to observation of the processes involved in listening to and understanding a foreign language. It is not concerned with aural discrimination of individual sounds (minimal pairs etc.), nor with the teaching of a prescribed list of key words or concepts. Its target is listening fluency. It works on the assumption that understanding spoken language involves the rapid decoding of a stream of speech sounds, that the component operations are swift and function largely automatically, and that a whole range of factors can impede the understanding process and prevent the total picture or meaning being communicated. These factors include signal quality (noisy classrooms), length of utterance, quantity of information, complexity (both grammatical and

semantic), unfamiliarity with specific vocabulary items, unfamiliarity with subject matter in general and the resultant reduction of contextual cues and of the listener's ability to anticipate meaning.

It is also assumed that if the listener does not rapidly interpret enough of the sound code, the whole message may be lost— because the listener holds on to meanings rather than sounds. In conversation between equals, where the initiative is evenly shared, the listener can easily check back if important meanings are not clear. But in the classroom the child rarely has this opportunity — or at least feels that to be the case. The final assumption is that this receptive facility, decoding fluency, can be improved with practice, pitched at the right level.

The Unit 1 material, accordingly, requires children to listen individually to a cassette recorder. The child hears stories, riddles, questions, instructions etc., all of which require some sort of drawn or written response based on the child's understanding of what he has heard. He is taught and encouraged to rewind as often as he needs, to make sure whenever he is not clear. Where the children are required to draw pictures or patterns in response to instructions, it is possible to explore this territory of partial understanding.

Thus, in a lesson which is the receptive equivalent of the symbol drawing activity described above, one of the instructions was : 'Draw a circle with a line going from the top of the circle to the bottom, then draw a three on the left hand side of the line'. In the trials of this Unit, about half the children whose responses were closely analysed drew the anticipated diagram (see (a) below). Of the remainder some children appeared to have understood very little, producing such drawings as (b) and (c). These were children for whom English was a second language, though their teachers had predicted no difficulty for them on this type of activity. Others produced minor variations such as (d) and (e) suggesting left/right uncertainty or dialect interference. But there was a third group whose response (e.g. (f)) indicated understanding of most of the elements in the instruction but who had failed to process it satisfactorily in its entirety.



The children working on this unit usually displayed great concentration and quickly mastered the rewind facility. Watching them, we reached the rather obvious conclusion that there was little profit (or interest) if the material was

either so straightforward that most children could cope easily and accurately after a single hearing or if it was so involved and difficult that they could make little sense of it. The ideal level was between these two — just on the boundary of the child's decoding capacity, occasioning the child to rewind once or twice and think a bit before committing himself to paper.

There has been little natural continuity between the topics assembled in this paper beyond the idea of investigating the space between concepts, which are sometimes dealt with as though they are rigidly discrete entities. The final space to be considered is not metaphorical — unless one accepts Whorf's suggestion that most 'time' language is a metaphor. This is the space between spoken words. In both the transcriptions contained in this paper there is visual evidence that the children sometimes hesitated mid-utterance. In fact no attempt was made in transcribing to record accurately the frequency and duration of these pauses. The flow of language on paper is rather more continuous than it was when spoken. A related phenomenon which occurs within utterances is that of internal reorganisation or running repairs. A good example is in the second transcription. Brian's penultimate attempt to describe the figure begins : 'Blue triangle . . . a red cross on top and two red . . . a red cross near down, down by the . . . at the bottom, etc.' These two phenomena are usually an indication that a child's productive language resources are being taxed, that he is using his language creatively, trying to make the words fit his intended meaning. It is also sometimes an indication that the child is developing a sense of objectivity about some of his own utterances, an awareness of how the listener may interpret them, where for example an expression may be ambiguous and calls for an extra comment. It is something of a paradox that while oral fluency may be one of the goals of the language teacher, one of the strategies should be to create situations where children can take the initiative linguistically and use their language resources exploratively and hesitantly. This holds true for English and foreign language teachers alike. And on this question at least, of how to organise a classroom for this sort of oral small group activity to be successful, there is not such a surfeit of information that communication between English and foreign language teachers would be unrewarding.

9

G E Perren

Some meeting points

It is not easy to summarise the views of a conference which revealed such a wide range of attitudes — moreover one in which both teachers of English and teachers of foreign languages were seeking to develop a consistent rationale of their own subjects autonomously as well as in relation to each other.

It would have served no useful purpose if essential differences between the educational philosophy of English teaching and that of foreign language teaching had been glossed over, or if speakers had searched only for points of superficial agreement. The aim of this conference was not diplomatic — that is merely to establish a temporary alliance for some immediate operational advantage. It was far more fundamental : to examine both the role of English and the justification for foreign language teaching in the whole curriculum, against an awareness of the changing social responsibility of education. If the conference had served only to clarify views about both English and foreign languages in the classroom, and then left them poles apart, it would still have been worthwhile. But far from leaving them in entrenched positions, staring at each other uncomprehendingly across a no-man's-land of disputed and unoccupied territory, it led to an increased awareness of the complex relationship between the mother tongue — in Mr Doughty's phrase the pupil's principal means for making personal his experience of the world — and his knowledge of a foreign language which by its nature represents a special increase of such experience. Nor did it ever become a flat confrontation between those who saw English teaching as creative, socially conciliatory and individually variable, and those who saw foreign language learning as a behaviouristically determined skill, emphasising conformity within an artificially contrived social role miles away from the pupil's real life, and operating within narrow linguistic constraints.

A first reading of the preceding papers tends to expose differences much more clearly than community of interest. In searching for an essential link between home and school, Dr Rosen seeks in English the means to maintain and develop the pupil's security and potential without denying or discounting his

home experience and loyalty. Professor Britton, less immediately concerned with the social duties of English, elaborates the value to the individual of developing its expressive role. Thence, as he says, 'the spectrum from expressive to poetic language . . . must lead to the kind of achievement we look for in English lessons'.

Rather shakily as yet, some sociolinguistic foundations for a theory of English teaching become apparent. Mr Doughty, both in his paper and elsewhere, makes a strong plea for 'an educational theory of language' in which English is more clearly recognised as spreading throughout the curriculum. Nevertheless, Professor Britton says, 'as English teachers we have tended to regard teachers of a foreign language as having less in common with the cause we are promoting than have teachers of most other subjects . . .'.

The implied challenge, that foreign languages can have no such claims as English in relation to the curriculum as a whole, is taken up by Professor Hawkins. To him they are extrovert where English is introvert. While Dr Rosen wants the school to reinforce the neglected values of the home environment, Professor Hawkins claims that school may indeed become a refuge for the child within which his freedom from outside pressures is guaranteed. Both are indeed for freedom, whether it be freedom from prejudice about (and hence distrust of) the resources of vernacular speech, or pupils' freedom from 'some of the pressures of market forces and parents' inability to defend them against would-be exploiters'. While one wishes to develop more fully the child's existing and neglected language resources, the other wishes consciously to extend them through a foreign language. This complexity of interrelationship arises partly from the double function of language teaching (whatever the language): the need to equip children with communicative competence socially, and at the same time the need to develop their individual cultural awareness.

It is against such creeds of social purpose and individualised development (a classic dichotomy of British educational thinking) that Dr Burstall's careful assessment of observed correlations between attitudes and measureable performance in French must be seen. It is a pity that no parallel study of English has been made; perhaps this cannot be done until the aims of English teaching are more widely agreed than at present. If as she says 'boys in secondary modern schools exhibit more hostile attitudes towards foreigners and their culture than any other group of pupils . . .' both English and foreign language teachers have a major task before them, for both are concerned with social attitudes and with developing tolerance and understanding of cultural differences.

Two papers deal explicitly with language as distinct from teaching aims and methods. Mr Forsyth analyses some aspects of the use of English by teachers, as distinct from what is taught. Once again it is sobering to find that teachers are so talkative and pupils so passive. Control of discourse by teachers today may be more complex, and indeed more subtle, than in the past; nevertheless the traditional pattern of teacher-directed activity, even in speech, seems to remain in spite of all our child-centred theories. Mr Forsyth shows how

language is used in the classroom to control learning and structure techniques of teaching. This, he says, is what we *do* as teachers, whatever the philosophy of our particular subject — be it English, science or a foreign language.

Mr Wight's *The space between* represents another potential meeting point. Faced with the problem of the West Indian pupil who is consciously and indeed necessarily acquiring a new dialect of English, the identity between English as an individual and social means of expression and communication, and English as a collection of new linguistic habits to be learned, becomes apparent. So too does the importance of using communication between *pupils* as a fundamental means to develop conceptualisation. Such techniques are clearly as important for non-immigrant English children as for immigrants.

Practical methods of providing language education for immigrant pupils in a non-selective secondary school were demonstrated by Mr Barwise with a film showing work at Deane High School, Bolton. This emphasised co-operation between English and other subjects, and the special use of science in teaching English. It may well be that 'cultural confrontation' can be eased when English is thus learned in a context other than the 'English' lesson.

But because the cultural content accounts for the foreignness of foreign languages, just as much as the unfamiliar noises and syntactic patterns which they require, the non-English speaking immigrants, notably those from India and Pakistan, provide the greatest challenge to all language teachers in British schools today. To such children we often assume English shall be taught to serve the educational purpose of a surrogate mother tongue. Unlike the working class dialects of Dr Rosen or the liberating French and Spanish of Professor Hawkins, their own languages seem to be given no educational potential or indeed any recognition beyond getting in the way. While this theme is given little prominence in the preceding papers, it recurs below.

It was against this background that the conference working parties were asked to consider and report on a number of topics: their conclusions are briefly summarised here.

Classroom teaching materials to facilitate language co-ordination

Referring to the proposal made by Professor Hawkins, it seems that there is a place in the curriculum for *the study of language*.[1] Such a course would aim to promote an awareness of differences in language behaviour and should consciously aim to increase sympathy towards speakers of other dialects and languages with a different background or culture.

Taking as a starting point the children's own experience of language (i.e. their own initiation into a foreign language, their experience of immigrant pupils in and out of school, and their acquaintance with local dialects) it could well provide excellent opportunities for enriching their use of English, for

[1] See also *Modern languages and European studies* (CILT Reports and Papers 9), chapter 9 and appendix 1.

increasing their understanding of all communication processes, for developing an awareness of the contributions of other groups to society, and for providing insight into the development of Europe — and indeed the influence of Europe on the rest of the world. Implementing such a programme, however, would most certainly require some modification of the present pattern of training teachers, both of English and of foreign languages.

Teacher training to facilitate co-ordination

The content of pre-service and in-service training will be a major factor in greater co-ordination of language teaching. In pre-service courses, linguistics and comparative literary studies could establish bridges between English and foreign languages, while European studies in colleges and departments of education could be of benefit to both. Clearly *all* teachers would profit from some study of language as it is actually used in the classroom, and more insight into techniques to do this should be provided. There exist notable differences in teachers' attitudes towards teaching English and teaching foreign languages — for example, the English teacher's emphasis on creative work contrasts with the foreign language teacher's preoccupation with establishing control of syntax. Development of a systematic common core of linguistic terminology, applicable to all languages, could well form a link in their training.

Clearly the joint experience and knowledge of English and foreign language teachers (especially in primary schools) could often be applied to the needs of immigrant pupils. There are occasional examples of this, but they are all too rare.

In-service training can, however, make an immediate impact: joint training schemes can well include teachers of English and foreign languages; opportunities for teachers of English to participate in international teacher exchanges, and practical work in contrastive linguistics and sociolinguistics in teachers' workshops are particularly desirable.

Problems of school organisation

The provision of modern languages for at least two years for all children (including non-English speaking immigrants), followed by optional courses adjusted to children's ability, is regarded as desirable.

Within schools, organisation should provide for horizontal cross-disciplinary links in place of or additional to the traditional vertical and hierarchical departmental organisation. This will provide better opportunities for time-table blocking and for possible team teaching in which all language study can be co-ordinated.

The development of the *study of language* may present organisational difficulties: in comprehensive schools teachers of foreign languages often retain the traditions of more academic teaching, while there is a general shortage of specialist staff and often a high rate of turnover. Co-operative or team teaching

demands continuity of teaching. The development of new curricular alliances will require not only more staff but specific in-service training within schools.

Home/school interaction

While the interaction between home and school is central to problems of language learning and development, it is also the subject of alarmingly contradictory theories — usually based on limited research and on wide assumptions.

Research appears to be most required on such subjects as :

(a) The nature of the language learned at home; the effects on school performance of a literate or non-literate home or of the mother's awareness of language. (This may not necessarily be a class-related question.)

(b) Correspondence and conflict between the child's language and the teacher's language : is this a matter of teachers' attitudes which could be changed? Would changes cause a significant difference in pupils' attitudes towards school or in their achievement there?

(c) The effect of the home culture on parents' and children's total attitudes to education; the possible effects of alienation on foreign language as well as on English learning.

The English teacher has a special responsibility and opportunity to integrate the linguistic experience and resources provided by the home with those provided in school. Moreover, if foreign languages are not to be segregated subjects, success in learning them will inevitably depend on such integration. Language departments in schools therefore have a special responsibility for fostering a close relationship between schools and homes.

Local advisers and resource centres

In large LEAs there is frequently little co-operation between advisers for English, foreign languages and immigrant education. In smaller authorities one person may well be responsible for all three areas of work. To some extent the development of closer co-operation between advisers must depend on the overt desire of schools for closer integration of subjects; at present there is little evidence of co-operation on a wide scale.

Local meetings between the representatives of language associations to discuss their overlapping interests are desirable. These could well be supported by regional seminars on current researches which are seen to be relevant to both English and foreign language teaching.

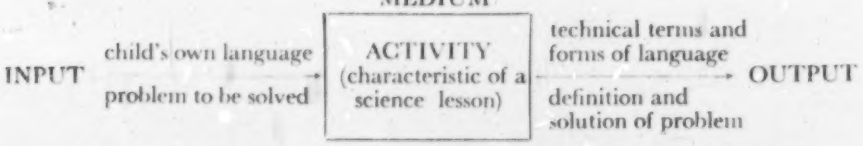
It is believed that local resource centres, whether LEA- or school-based, at present provide much more for English than for foreign languages. Better and wider provision for foreign languages would encourage co-ordination.

The language needs of science and other subjects

Not only the working parties, but the conference as a whole, frequently noted that every teacher was an English teacher — although some were more

so than others. Science can easily be identified as a subject in which a certain precision in the use of English can be taught, although many other subjects have a similar potential which is often unexploited.

Diagrammatically the influence of the medium (e.g. science) on language development can be illustrated :



The *activity* can well involve expressive and imaginative language in group discussion and experimental work. The use of accurate technical terminology should thus be a product of such activity, as the output, rather than a part of the presentation of the problem at the input stage.

Teachers of all subjects require a clearer understanding of the demands their own subjects make on the language ability of pupils : at present opportunities for developing the pupil's use of English are often neglected.

The overall language skills of pupils (whether derived from the teaching of English or of foreign languages) inevitably contribute to the use of English in all subjects, even if teachers of English or foreign languages cannot often explicitly direct their teaching to the special needs of particular subjects.

The special needs of immigrants

Every school must be able to develop resources to deal with whatever problems of multi-racial education it has to face. As far as immigrants are concerned, language teaching cannot be limited to teaching English vocabulary or structure; inevitably it must also include propagating a range of cultural behaviour and beliefs on which the whole school curriculum is based. The cultural heritage of immigrants should certainly be preserved and understood in the school no less than that of its native English pupils.

While English teachers in particular seem to have a special responsibility for this, it is a misconception that the English lesson always provides immigrants with the best introduction to the mainstream curriculum of the school. Science and other subjects are probably more effective, especially if their language demands are carefully analysed and suitably simplified for immigrants so as to be the basis for teaching them facility in English.

Foreign languages should certainly also be taught to immigrant children, although if they are already having special problems with English, this should be taken into account in deciding when. To some immigrants their previous language learning experience may well be an advantage. Immigrants' own languages should be offered within the range of foreign language options in schools where there is a demand for them.

CONCLUSION

This brief survey of opinions and suggestions from conference participants perhaps exhibits a certain caution, appropriate to those who have the daily problems of school organisation and teaching to face, about embarking on radical changes of curricular organisation. Nevertheless some clear indications for the future emerge: teachers of English and of foreign languages wish to know much more about each other's work; they have a common concept of language in the curriculum; they realise its importance to other subjects — and at the same time see clearly the function of other subjects in developing language ability.

Traditions, however, remain strong, and are protected by training as well as by the cake of custom developed in particular schools. Paradoxically, rapid staff changes in schools tend to perpetuate existing methods and attitudes by teachers rather than vary them, for when one's stay is short it is easier to conform than to initiate change.

Whether it is class-based, race-determined or economically generated, contrast (and sometimes conflict) between the culturally determined language of the home and the expectations of the school is a notion which gives rise to constant unease. As always too, the mass media seem to loom large, and teachers are often undecided whether to regard them as allies or as enemies in their work.

The position of immigrants' own languages needs more thought. Obviously they cannot be left out of any comprehensive theory of language in education; as children's mother tongues they deserve at least as much consideration as any other identifiable out-of-school vernacular, be it West Indian, working-class or middle-class English. Perhaps they deserve far more, since they are more clearly culturally discrete and linguistically autonomous. There may indeed be a case for bilingual teaching in which Urdu and Punjabi are used in some schools, so that the frequently recommended respect for the culture of immigrants can thus have a practical and useful expression.

The explorations of the functions of language in education which have been collected here are only a starting point. The first need is for teachers of English and of foreign languages to have a clear understanding of, and respect for, each others' aims. To some it may appear that while it is comparatively easy to find a community of purpose in theory, it is less easy to implement it in practice — in terms of planned classroom activity and particular syllabuses. But at the most practical level of all, that of the pupil on the receiving end of all the language teaching which the school provides, correlation and some form of co-ordination inevitably takes place. The true meeting point is the individual pupil who will construct his own language universe from this total experience, however it is presented. Should not his task be made easier by conscious design?

Appendix

Conference participants

LEA representatives are identified by the name of their authority which is given in brackets.

R. Aitchison, *West Bank High School, Skelmersdale*, (Lancashire)
H. Alker, *General Adviser, Primary Education*, (Rochdale)
Mrs C. S. Bark, *Brierfield Mansfield High School, Nelson*, (Lancashire)
F. Barwise, *The Deane High School*, (Bolton)
B. Bates, *Breezehill School*, (Oldham)
H. S. Baxter, *Seedfield County Secondary School*, (Bury)
J. S. Baxter, *Advisory Teacher for French*, (Cheshire)
H. C. Bentley, *General Adviser, Secondary Education*, (Rochdale)
P. Birchall, *Lymm County Grammar School*, (Cheshire)
Dr A. Bird, *Edge Hill College of Education, Ormskirk*
Mrs C. E. Bowles, *Fylde Lodge High School*, (Stockport)
A. F. Boxford, *Ormonde High School, Liverpool*, (Lancashire)
G. R. Brammall, *Stockport School*, (Stockport)
Professor J. N. Britton, *University of London Goldsmiths' College*
N. C. Burgess, *Senior Inspector for Modern Languages*, (Cheshire)
Dr Clare Burstall, *National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales*
C. R. Calton, *Hazel Grove County High School*, (Cheshire)
A. Cardus, *Manchester Teachers' Centre*, (Manchester)
B. K. Davison, *Ellesmere Park High School, Eccles*, (Lancashire)
J. W. Dixon, *Greenhill School*, (Rochdale)
J. S. Dougan, *Teacher-Adviser*, (Salford)
Mrs E. A. Doughty
P. S. Doughty, *Manchester College of Education*
J. G. P. Edwards, *Wilbraham High School*, (Manchester)
J. H. Edwards, *Runcorn Norton Priory County Comprehensive School*, (Cheshire)
J. D. Emmott, *Manchester Teachers' Centre*, (Manchester)
Mrs E. C. Ewen, *National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales*
I. J. Forsyth, *Centre for Language in Primary Education, Inner London Education Authority*
Mrs M. A. Gadian, *Yew Tree High School*, (Manchester)

D. W. Garnett, *Counihill School*, (Oldham)
G. Gluyas, *Brinnington Secondary School*, (Stockport)
Miss J. R. Gordon, *Shawfield Middle School*, (Rochdale)
J. O. Graves, *General Organiser for Schools*, (Bolton)
Mrs E. Greenhalgh, *Bury Church School*, (Bury)
B. T. Grist, *St. Richard's High School, Skelmersdale*, (Lancashire)
G. Gyte, *Hope Hall High School*, (Salford)
R. A. Hartley, *Buile Hill High School*, (Salford)
Professor E. W. Hawkins, *University of York*, Governor of CILT
J. Hemmings, *Hathershaw School*, (Oldham)
P. H. Hoy, HMI
P. Ingram, *Heywood Sutherland High School*, (Lancashire)
C. V. James, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
A. Kenna, *St. Gabriel's Roman Catholic Secondary School*, (Bury)
Miss D. Kyne, *Dukinfield Astley County Grammar School for Girls*, (Cheshire)
Mrs C. Leach, *St. Mark's Roman Catholic Secondary School*, (Manchester)
G. F. Liddell, *Centre for Information on the Teaching of English* (Edinburgh)
Miss P. M. Logan, *Abraham Moss Centre*, (Manchester)
Miss H. N. Lunt, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
Mrs M. McKeown, *Howarth Cross Middle School*, (Rochdale)
J. D. Mackereth, *Morecambe Grammar School*, (Lancashire)
Miss I. L. Mackerness, *Organiser, Primary Schools*, (Oldham)
M. Macmillan, *British Council*, Governor of CILT
J. M. McNair, *University of Manchester*
F. Makin, HMI
Mrs A. P. Marshall, *Advisory Teacher for French* (Cheshire)
G. M. Matthews, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
W. Mitchell, *Educational Publishers' Council*
M. J. Molloy, *St. Aelred's High School, Newton-le-Willows*, (Lancashire)
Mrs H. Moorhouse, *Greenhill School*, (Oldham)
Dr G. D. Morley, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
J. H. Mundy, HMI
C. J. Newman, *Warden, Manchester Teachers' Centre*
Miss M. Nicholls, *Matthew Moss School*, (Rochdale)
Mrs E. Pagliacci, *Cheadle County Grammar School for Girls* (Cheshire)
G. E. Perren, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
Mrs D. M. Pester, *Teachers' Centre, Urmston*, (Lancashire)
G. R. Potter, *West Sussex Education Authority*, Chairman of CILT Board of Governors
J. E. Ratcliffe, *The Derby School*, (Bury)
J. M. Reilly, *Wellington County Secondary School*, (Bury)
Mrs M. Roberts, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
Dr H. Rosen, *University of London Institute of Education*
R. M. Routh, *Culcheth High School, Warrington*, (Lancashire)
Miss E. Rushton, *General Adviser*, (Salford)
D. E. Saunders, *Brunner School, Teesside* Governor of CILT
J. Schofield, *Spurley Hey High School*, (Manchester)

R. Schwarz, *Unsworth Comprehensive School*, (Bury)
W. M. Shortt, *District Inspector*, (Manchester)
Professor J. M. Sinclair, *University of Birmingham*
Professor A. Spicer, *University of Essex*
R. Standring, *Davenport Secondary School*, (Stockport)
G. Taylor, *Manchester Teachers' Centre*, (Manchester)
J. Thompson, *Reddish Vale Comprehensive School*, (Stockport)
G. Thornton, *Senior Inspector for English Studies*, (Cheshire)
H. H. Topper, *Pendleton College*, (Salford)
J. Travis, *Whitworth High School, Rochdale*, (Lancashire)
J. E. Trickey, HMI
J. Turner, *Grange School*, (Oldham)
Professor J. D. Turner, *University of Manchester*
D. Wardell, *Wilmslow County Grammar School for Boys*, (Cheshire)
D. W. T. Watson, *Senior Adviser for Schools*, (Lancashire)
A. N. Whitehead, *Runcorn Norton Priory County Comprehensive School*, (Cheshire)
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